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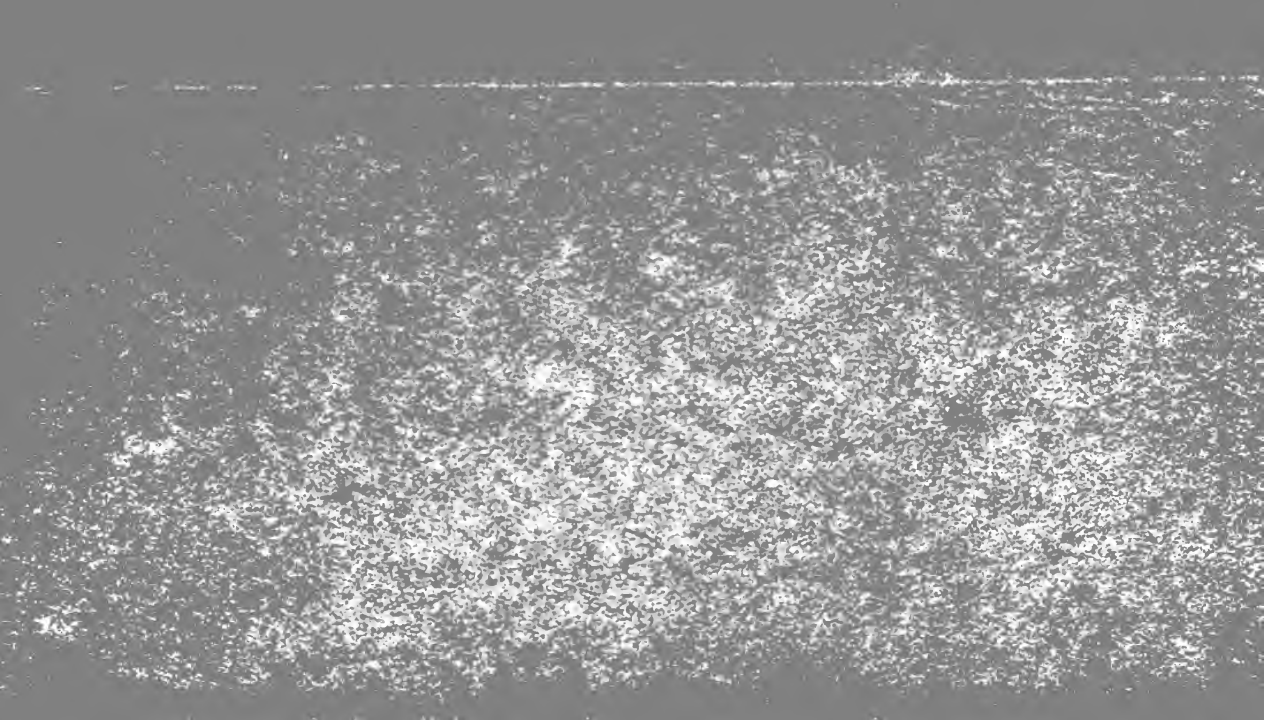

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JOHN CHARLES FREMONT

MAKERS OF AMERICAN HISTORY

THE

LEWIS & CLARK

EXPLORING EXPEDITION, 1804-'06

BY

G. MERCER ADAM

JOHN CHARLES FREMONT

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CHARLES WENTWORTH UPHAM

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LEWIS AND CLARK EXPLORING EXPEDITION

CHAPTER I

THE PURPOSES AND ORGANIZATION OF THE MISSION

FEW chapters in the annals of American discovery in the once dark places of the New World Continent are more interesting to the modern-day reader, or more full of venturesome daring and hardy adventure, than the story told in the narrative of the Lewis and Clark Exploring Expedition in the years 1804-06. That notable expedition, fruitful in high and useful achievement, for the first time threw light upon the wilderness region that at that early era stretched from the mouth of the Missouri River to where the waters of the Columbia River enter the Pacific Ocean. The vast region now to be opened to civilization, and then known as the Louisiana Territory, came into the possession of the United States, at the farsighted instigation of President Jefferson, by a rare stroke of American diplomacy. It consisted of nearly a million square miles, and embraced what is now the States of Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Nebraska, North

and South Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, with parts of Colorado, Minnesota, and Idaho, and all of what is now the Territory of Oklahoma. At the period, it was the abode, almost exclusively, of warring Indian tribes, most of whom lived in a state of nature, and were, moreover, hostile to all intruders on their wild domain. The civilized peoples sparsely inhabiting its trackless spaces did not exceed 50,000, chiefly French *coureurs de bois,* or of French descent, with a sprinkling of Spanish, Germans, English, and Americans, and about 40,000 negro slaves. Almost solely on the Atlantic slope, at the era of the Revolutionary War and up to the close of the eighteenth century, the people of the New World Republic were confined, the region west of the Alleghanies being an almost unbroken wilderness, known only to the hardy Western frontiersman and to the roving employees of the two great Fur Companies. Up to the opening year of the new (nineteenth) century, the Louisiana Territory had been the possession of Spain, the United States enjoying only as a privilege, by a lapsed treaty with that declining peninsular Power, the free navigation of the Mississippi, with a provisional right of deposit for their commerce at its seaport on the island of New Orleans. But a change of ownership came in 1800, when Spain ceded to France all of Louisiana by the secret treaty of St. Ildefonso. This acquisition by France was naturally a matter of alarm to the then Administration of the American Republic, the one man who was most alive to the gravity of the change of ownership being President Jeffer-

son, who, when the transfer to France became known, instructed the nation's ambassador at Paris to treat with France for the purchase of New Orleans and the Floridas and the control of the Mississippi. Luckily, Bonaparte at the time was not only fearful lest he should not be able to utilize the Louisiana Territory for colonization purposes or be secure in holding it in the prospect of renewed war with Great Britain, but was also in urgent need of money. The consequence was the sale by France to the United States, in 1803, of the entire Louisiana Territory for the consideration of 80,000,000 francs, or $15,000,000. The negotiation came as a surprise to our American people, and even to the Jefferson Administration, which had only thought to obtain, and had only directed the purchase of, West Florida and the port of Mobile, with enough of lower Louisiana to give American commerce on the upper waters of the Mississippi the right of way to the sea. The transaction, which added the area of an empire to the possessions of the United States, was subsequently confirmed by the Washington Government and ratified by the United States Senate (July 31, 1803), and the occupation of the region was presently entered upon.

The purchase by this country of the enormous added area to the possessions of the nation, at what was then a heavy expenditure of money, did not at first please all parties, either in or out of the Union. The Federalists at home opposed it, as a negotiation unwarranted by the Constitution, and tending greatly to qualify New England influence in the

political affairs of the Republic. Spain also resented its transfer to the United States since her agreement on the cession of the territory to France was that the latter should not subsequently alienate it—a matter that gave Napoleon no trouble—; but also because she hotly protested against the loss of West Florida, and in consequence refused to pay the United States her claim upon Spain of sums due her for the spoliation of American commerce. The matter, for the time, went into the limbo of diplomatic negotiation, as far as Spain was concerned, though afterwards in our relations with the Power that had discovered America the trouble was amicably settled in our favor. Peaceful adjudication of our differences with Spain was materially helped in 1819, when, under Madison's régime, East Florida was ceded to the United States for a payment of $6,500,000 with the renunciation of all claims by Spain north of the forty-second parallel as far west as the Pacific.

Before these difficulties had been removed and settled, this country, by treaty with France, entered formally into possession of the Louisiana purchase on Dec. 20, 1803; and President Jefferson at once set himself the task of raising a moiety of money ($2,500) to defray the cost of an expedition into the Territory, and of calling into existence the organized band of scientists and others who were to conduct and give effect to the exploratory movement. In this epic of exploration, which it now becomes our purpose to narrate, it is gratifying to find it throughout highly creditable to all parties

concerned in it. From the first, it was ideally harmonious as well as perfect in its organization, thanks not only to the loyalty and good sense of the men who were chosen to conduct it, but especially to President Jefferson, whose statesmanlike project it was, and who took so hearty and intelligent an interest in its achievement and success, besides elaborately planning the scope and purposes of the exploratory mission. The obstacles to be surmounted in carrying out the purposes of the Expedition were known to be great; but great also were the objects sought to be gained by the undertaking, and, to the nation, important were the interests at stake. South of the international boundary line, more than a third of the Continent, as yet shrouded in darkness, was to be looked upon and explored. Beyond the little that was known of the region to the happy-go-lucky fur trader and wandering nomad of the woods, practically the entire stretch of country from the upper waters of the Missouri to the Pacific was geographically a blank. Even the salient physical features—the barrier of the Rocky Mountains, to wit—were unknown; the whole interior, then a desolate waste, was supposed to be a vast undulating plain, seamed with rivers, and occasionally broken by hill lines of uncertain altitude and extent of stretch, with no accurate knowledge of where they lay, or of the formidable character of the barrier they interposed between the interior plains and the Far Western sea. In this new domain of the nation, many Indian tribes were inferred to exist that had never come into contact with the white man; while

little was as yet known of the vast river, the Columbia, that drained the area on the western slopes of the (Stony) Rocky Mountains and carried its watery burden to the Pacific. Only since the Spring of 1792 was the existence of the great western river definitely known, when Captain Gray of the Boston vessel, the *Columbia,* then discovered its harbor-mouth between the high capes that shielded and all but enclosed it from the ocean.

To probe throughout the great interior track of over 4,000 miles and report upon its resources and characteristic features, as well as to ascertain what native tribes inhabited it, and what relations of amity and commerce the nation that had become its owner might expect to have with them, were matters well worth investigating and reporting upon. To the organization of an expedition to ascertain these and other purposes, President Jefferson, as we have related, now actively addressed himself; and soon he had the satisfaction of seeing its forces assembled ready to set out on its important mission. For the chief command of the Expedition, the President, fortunately, had already in his eye a suitable man, of excellent parts, in the person of a Virginian of good family, under thirty years of age, who at one time had been his own private secretary. This was Captain Meriwether Lewis, who had seen service in the United States army, and who, in his official relations with the President, had had his own interest quickened in the Louisiana Territory he was now, with his colleague and command, about to explore. The colleague we have mentioned, who

shared with Lewis the task about to be undertaken, was Captain William Clark, a Kentuckian of Virginian origin, who had also been in the army, but was at the time farming in his adopted Kentucky State. His brother was the well-known General George Rogers Clark, who had achieved fame in the Revolutionary era in wars against the Indians. Like Lewis, who was an old comrade, William Clark was admirably fitted for responsible command, and was at the same time familiar with frontier life. He was, moreover, a man of excellent character, as well as of great hardihood and self-reliance, though manifestly lacking in the essentials of a liberal education, as we amusingly see from his misspelled epistles and reports. Such were the two men, singularly loyal to each other and to the task about to be assigned them, who were to be entrusted with the responsible command of the President's commission of investigation in the vast territory the nation had just acquired from France.

Of Captain Lewis, we get a fuller and instructive account from President Jefferson himself, written after the explorer's lamented death, in 1809, when the Expedition had become an interesting part of the national annals. The eulogy we shall, no doubt, be pardoned for here introducing to the reader. Concerning Lewis and his qualifications, the President relates:

"I had now had opportunities of knowing him (Lewis) intimately. Of courage undaunted; possessing a firmness and perseverance of purpose which nothing but impossibilities could divert from

its direction; careful as a father of those committed to his charge, yet steady in the maintenance of order and discipline; intimate with the Indian character, customs, and principles; habituated to the hunting life; guarded, by exact observation of the vegetables and animals of his own country, against losing time in the description of objects already possessed; honest, disinterested, liberal, of sound understanding, and a fidelity to truth so scrupulous that whatever he should report would be as certain as if seen by ourselves—with all these qualifications, as if selected and implanted by nature in one body for this express purpose, I could have no hesitation in confiding the enterprise to him. To fill up the measure desired, he wanted nothing but a greater familiarity with the technical language of the natural sciences, and readiness in the astronomical observations necessary for the geography for his route. To acquire these, he repaired to Philadelphia, and placed himself under the tutorage of the distinguished professors of that place, who, with a zeal and emulation enkindled by an ardent devotion to science, communicated to him freely the information requisite for the purposes of the journey. While attending at Lancaster to the fabrication of the arms with which he chose that his men should be provided, he had the benefit of daily communication with Mr. Andrew Ellicott, whose experience in astronomical observation, and practice of it in the woods, enabled him to apprise Captain Lewis of the wants and difficulties he would encounter, and of the substitutes and resources afforded by a woodland and uninhabited country."

How faithful and correct is this characterization of the chief leader of the Expedition, from Jefferson's kindly pen, is well attested by the facts which came out during the progress of the exploring party and by the success which attended the entire mission. Valuable also were the counsels and hints of the President to Captain Lewis in conducting the Expedition, and clear the objects set forth by him to be attained by the explorers in the vast solitudes they were about to enter upon. Considerate and humane also were his instructions as to the attitude which should govern the commanding leader in his intercourse with the Indians to be met with, and minute the matters he desired that the Expedition should gather that would afterwards be helpful to trade and colonization in the region. In regard to the Indians, Mr. Jefferson counsels Captain Lewis to "treat them in the most friendly and conciliating manner which their own conduct will admit; allay all jealousies as to the object of your journey; satisfy them of its innocence; make them acquainted with the position, extent, character, peaceable and commercial disposition, of the United States; of our wish to be neighborly, friendly, and useful to them, and of our dispositions to a commercial intercourse with them; confer with them on the points most convenient as mutual emporiums, and the articles of most desirable interchange for them and us. If a few of their influential chiefs, within practicable distance, wish to visit us, arrange such a visit with them, and furnish them with authority to call on our officers, on their entering the United States, to have them

conveyed to this place at the public expense. If any of them should wish to have some of their people brought up with us, and taught such arts as may be useful to them, we will receive, instruct, and take care of them." Hardly less practical was the array of motley garments and dress outfits, coins, trinkets, and other articles with which the Expedition was furnished as the material of exchange or barter with the natives, or as presents for the Indian chiefs and their concubines. Careful, moreover, were the hints given the Expedition leaders as to their conduct and the course to be pursued in the event of the mission meeting with hostilities from the natives *en route*; though, necessarily, much latitude was allowed them in taking their own course in dealing with hostile tribes and in pressing on through, or retiring from, situations of grave menace or threatened hurt. A like latitude was given the command as to the routes to be pursued across the continent and returning, other than the general course tentatively indicated; while instructions were considerately given the leader to draw upon the national exchequer, through local agents of the United States, for the moneys needed for the unprovided-for expenses and other incidental charges of the journey. The latter provision, as it obviously turned out, was a work of pure supererogation, since local banking offices or officials of the Government service were not likely to be found in the domains of desolation and solitude.

CHAPTER II

THE EQUIPMENT AND START OF THE EXPEDITION

By this time, Captain Lewis had selected with great care and judiciousness the members of the Expedition and gathered them at St. Louis, where, or rather at the mouth of the Missouri close by, he spent the winter of 1803 and the early Spring of 1804 in drilling and instructing the men in their respective duties, as component parts of an Expedition which was to be conducted as a military as well as an exploratory organization. Here were concentrated or constructed the impedimenta of the Expedition, in the shape of sail-boats, canoes, and other craft for use on the rivers and streams to be met with on the long and necessarily toilsome journey, with their equipment of sails, oars, and steering gear; as well as tents for shelter, and guns and ammunition for self-protection or for hunting purposes; together with all other necessary outfit, including a couple of horses for towing, hauling, or other occasional service. Here also were gathered the provisions and stores of all kinds, including mathematical instruments, writing material, medicine chests, Indian presents, and camp equipage, done up in portable packs for easy transportation by the carriers of the Expedition across the continent.

Interest will doubtless be taken by the reader in what we have now to relate of the numbers composing the Expedition, and the functions which each section of the party were engaged to perform. All told, the Expedition consisted of forty-five members, though but two-thirds of this number were expected to accompany the dual-leaders throughout—the other third, chiefly boatmen got together at St. Louis, being engaged to go with the mission as far only as the villages of the Mandan Nation. Besides the two commanding officers, the party embraced nine hardy young Kentuckians, more or less accustomed to frontier and woodland life; fourteen soldiers of the regular army who had volunteered their services; fifteen boatmen; two Indian hunters and interpreters; two French voyageurs; and a negro valet and servitor of Captain Clark. Carefully selected, and well-handled and led, the Expedition had in it the promise of effecting the great and beneficent purpose for which it had been got together and enrolled. It set off, at first rather inauspiciously, in the teeth of a head-wind, on Monday, the 21st of May, 1804, and, four days later, in its ascent of the Lower Missouri waters, it reached La Charette, almost the last white settlement in the region, and the humble home of Daniel Boone, the renowned backwoodsman of Kentucky. On the way hither, the boats of the party, comprising a long-keeled bateau, manned by twenty-two oars, and several "pirogues," or open boats, propelled by six oars, encountered little of interest, save the vessels of some fur traders loaded with peltry, whose prows were set down stream in

the direction of St. Louis, the chief *entrepôt* of the region. On the river's banks, they passed a few scattered clearings of French woodsmen and hunters, who eked out an indifferent living by the poor products of their little farm plots. Now and then, they also met a few Indians, of the Kickapoo and Kansas tribes, with whom they did a little bartering, procuring several deer or an occasional buffalo for the questionable equivalent of a quart or two of whiskey.

So far as they had gone, game, it will be seen, was abundant, bears also being met with as well as moose and buffalo, besides wild turkeys and geese; while the Expedition found plenty in the way of fruit-relish to tickle the palate, including wild currants, mulberries, plums, and raspberries. The gathering of these delicacies by the river's banks, and an occasional halt to prepare supplies of jerked beef for future contingencies, when provisions by the way would be scarce, served to enliven the journey and occupy the men's minds so that they should not, by anticipation, worry themselves over the coming perils of the way. Towards the close of June, a month and a half after they had set out, the party reached the mouth of the Kansas River, where Kansas City now stands, and here the leaders held a friendly pow-wow with the Indians of the vicinity. A month later, the mouth of the Platte River was come to, six hundred miles above St. Louis, and at this point was reached what the party were aware was the dividing line which marked the known from the unknown. Henceforth, solitude lay before them, save for its

Indian contingent of Missouris, Ottoes, and Pawnees, who sparsely people the region. At this place, the commanders of the Expedition deemed it proper, before committing their party to the unknown perils of the district embraced in the Upper Missouri waters, to call a council of the native tribes and their chiefs, that they might inform them of the pacific purposes of the Expedition, and, if possible, allay hostility at the threshold of their wild domain. At the bidding of messengers sent out to summon the tribes, fourteen representative Indians put in an appearance at the white men's camp, bringing with them presents of delicious watermelons, in return for which they were regaled with overflowing platters of roast-beef and pork, temptingly set before them, in addition to a goodly supply of flour and corn-meal. Here, in the "Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition," is the account placed on record (August 3rd) of the conference, on the site of what has since been known as Council Bluffs, Iowa:

"This morning the Indians, with their six chiefs, were all assembled under an awning formed with the mainsail, in presence of all our party, paraded for the occasion. A speech was then made announcing to them the change in the government (from France to the United States), our promise of protection, and advice as to their future conduct. All the six chiefs replied to our speech, each in his turn, according to rank. They expressed their joy at the change in the government; their hopes that we would recommend them to their Great Father (the President), that they might obtain trade and necessaries; they wanted

arms as well for hunting as for defence, and asked our mediations between them and the Mahars (? Omahas), with whom they are now at war. We promised to do so, and wished some of them to accompany us to that nation, which they declined, for fear of being killed by them. We then proceeded to distribute our presents. The grand chief of the nation not being of the party, we sent him a flag, a medal, and some ornaments for clothing. To the six chiefs who were present, we gave a medal of the second grade to one Ottoe chief and one Missouri chief; a medal of the third grade to two inferior chiefs of each nation—the customary mode of recognizing a chief being to place a medal round his neck, which is considered among his tribe as a proof of his consideration abroad. Each of these medals was accompanied by a present of paint, garters, and cloth ornaments of dress; and to these we added a canister of powder, a bottle of whiskey, and a few presents to the whole, which appeared to make them perfectly satisfied. The air-gun, too, was fired and astonished them greatly. . . . ."

Leaving the vicinity of Council Bluffs, near where the friendly pow-wow took place, the Expedition leaders, later on in the month (August, 1804), had a conference with other Indian chiefs (Ottoes) of the region. Much the same ceremony was gone through with, and the tribe was made acquainted, as the Missouris and Pawnees had been, with the new possessors of the territory, in the persons of its explorer-representatives. The accustomed gifts were distributed to the chiefs, and a favorable impression

was left upon them of the considerateness and friendly attitude of their new masters. At this period (August 19), the Expedition lost by death, after a few days' illness, one of its non-commissioned officers, Sergeant Charles Floyd, in memory of whom a stream that flowed into the Upper Missouri close by which the sergeant died was named. His vacant post was filled by a popular member from the rank and file of the expeditionary corps, Patrick Gass, who got his triple stripes by the votes of his comrades. This democratic mode of filling a vacancy was creditable to the tact of the commanders of the Expedition, and conducive to the engendering of a healthy *esprit de corps* among its members. The circumstance indicates the hearty good feeling that pervaded all ranks, so far on in the journey, as it also manifests their loyal interest in the objects of the Expedition and their common desire that it should be abundantly successful.

CHAPTER III

AMONG THE SIOUX

By the close of August, the country of the great Sioux nation was entered upon, now South Dakota, and intercourse was had with several of its warlike tribes, including first the Yanktons, and afterwards the Mandans, Tetons, Minnetarees, and Ricara. The Yankton-Sioux, about one thousand strong, were found inhabiting Bon Homme Island and the country around the Yankton, or Dakota, River, other lodges of the tribe being found on the banks of the Des Moines and the Sioux Rivers. Only with the ugly-tempered and rascally Tetons did the Expedition have any trouble; with the others, relations were made pleasant by the exercise of tact, and by the presents distributed to their chief men at the palavers that ensued. In the intercourse of the white explorers with the Yanktons, Lewis and Clark were aided by the friendly offices of Pierre Dorion, an intelligent halfbreed, whom they met on the Missouri on his way to St. Louis, and whom they were successful in inducing to return to the lodges of the Yankton-Sioux, to act as interpreter and intermediary with the tribe. He it was who guided the messengers of the Expedition to the chief village of the Yanktons, for the purpose of calling them into coun-

cil. Here they were amicably received, and had set before them, for their refreshment and as an evidence of their friendly disposition, a tempting dish of roast dog! In return, the Yanktons were rewarded with presents of tobacco, together with some highly appreciated cooking utensils.

The conference with the Yanktons occurred on the last day of August, under an oak tree near by the lodges of the tribe, and from the top of which the "Stars and Stripes" had been given to the breeze. Here the pipe of peace was smoked, and before the harangue began the Indians' head chief was presented with sundry gifts, including a richly laced uniform of the United States artillery, with cocked hat and red feather. This brought to his feet the native chieftain, Weucha, or "Shake Hand," who, after some reference to Captain Lewis's opening speech of counsel and instruction, thus addressed the white leaders of the party:

"I see before me my Great Father's two sons. You see me and the rest of our chiefs and warriors. We are very poor; we have neither powder, nor ball, nor knives; and our women and children at the village have no clothes. I wish that as my brothers have given me a flag and a medal, they would give something to those poor people, or let them stop and trade with the first boat which comes up the river. I will bring the chiefs of the Pawnees and Mahas (Omahas) together and make peace between them; but it is better that I should do it than my Great Father's sons, for they will listen to me more readily. I will also take some chiefs to your country in the

Spring; but before that time I cannot leave home. I went formerly to the English, and they gave me a medal and some clothes; when I went to the Spanish they gave me a medal, but nothing to keep it from my skin; but now you give me a medal and clothes. But still we are poor; and I wish, brothers, that you would give us something for our squaws."

Other chiefs of the tribe spoke briefly, endorsing the poverty of the band as set forth by the head chief, and their need of many things to relieve their distress, including powder and ball, and a supply of their Great Father's milk—an euphemism for ardent spirits! From the Lewis and Clark "Journal" we further learn that the Yanktons promised to make peace with the Ottoes and Missouris, the only nations with whom they were then at war. From the same source, we also learn of other matters which engaged the attention of the scientific members of the Expedition in the region, chiefly in respect to the animal life of the district, including "burrowing squirrels," as the prairie-dog, or, more properly, the marmot, was then termed; together with "barking squirrels," mule-deer, antelopes, etc. Besides these animals noted and reported in the journal of the explorers, mention is also made of fossil remains being met with of fish, reptiles and other life belonging to early geological periods, in addition to the ever-present and actively troublesome mosquito. The mule-deer spoken of as being found in the vicinity were afterwards discovered to be of the rather rare species of black-tailed deer, with noticeably long ears.

In the Journal of Captain Clark, we are given an

account, in his curiously misspelled English, of an encounter, about the end of September, with the villanous Tetons, whose lodges the Expedition had now come to in their passage up the Missouri. The leaders of the tribe, in accordance with custom, had been invited to a friendly conference with the whites, and they and some of their people were afterwards asked to inspect at close quarters the Expedition's chief vessel. What followed is thus narrated by Clark, prefaced by some little detail of the meeting with the Tetons:

"On the morning of September 25th, relates the Journal, we raised a flagstaff and an awning, under which we assembled, with all the party parading under arms. The chiefs and warriors from the camps two miles up the river met us, about fifty or sixty in number, and after smoking we delivered them a speech; but as our interpreter, M. Dorion, had been left with the Yanktons, we were obliged to make use of a Frenchman who could not speak fluently, and therefore we curtailed our harangue. After this we went through the ceremony of acknowledging the chiefs, by giving to the grand chief a medal, a flag of the United States, a laced uniform coat, a cocked hat and feather; to the two other chiefs, a medal and some small presents; and to two warriors of consideration, certificates. The name of the great chief is Untongasabau, or Black Buffalo; the second, Tortohango, or the Partisan; the third, Tartongawaka, or Buffalo Medicine; the name of one of the warriors was Wawzinggo; that of the second, Matocoquepa, or Second Bear. We then invited the

chiefs on board, and showed them the boat, the air-gun, and such curiosities as we thought might amuse them. In this we succeeded too well; for, after giving them a quarter of a glass of whiskey, which they seemed to like very much, and sucked the bottle, it was with much difficulty that we could get rid of them. They at last accompanied Captain Clark on shore, in a pirogue with five men; but it seems they had formed a design to stop us; for no sooner had the party landed than three of the Indians seized the cable of the pirogue, and one of the soldiers of the chief put his arms round the mast. The second chief, who affected intoxication, then said that we should not go on; that they had not received presents enough from us. Captain Clark told him that he would not be prevented from going on; that we were not squaws, but warriors; that we were sent by our Great Father, who could in a moment exterminate them. The chief replied that he too had warriors, and was proceeding to offer personal violence to Captain Clark, who immediately drew his sword, and made a signal to the boat to prepare for action. The Indians, who surrounded him, drew their arrows from their quivers, and were bending their bows, when the swivel in the boat was instantly pointed toward them, and twelve of our most determined men jumped into the pirogue and joined Captain Clark. This movement made an impression on them, for the grand chief ordered the young men away from the pirogue, and they withdrew and held a short council with the warriors. Being unwilling to irritate them, Captain Clark then went forward

and offered his hand to the first and second chiefs, who refused to take it. He then turned from them and got into the pirogue; but he had not gone more than ten paces when both of the chiefs and two of the warriors waded in after him, and he brought them on board. We then proceeded on for a mile, and anchored off a willow island, which, from the circumstances which had just occurred, we called "Bad-humored Island."

The union of firmness with gentleness which marked the command, in its relations with the Tetons, not only averted what might have been serious trouble, but enabled the party to gain the respect, if not the amity, of the tribe; though it was found difficult to eradicate from the minds of the Tetons hostile designs upon the Expedition, in the way either of destroying it or of effectually barring its progress. The next day, better thoughts having prevailed, and the tribe manifesting a more amicable disposition, friendly relations were renewed. Such was the improved state of things between the red and the white men, that the representative men of the tribe came, in a contrite mood, to the leaders of the Expedition and begged that their squaws and young folk might be allowed to see the exploring party and look over the boats. This, of course, was agreed to; and when the visitors had had their fill of sights and were about to withdraw they expressed their delight at what they had seen, and, in turn, invited the whites ashore to a pow-wow, feast, and dance. The incidents of the meeting are thus related in the Journal of the Expedition:

"Captains Lewis and Clark, who went on shore one after the other, were met on landing by ten well-dressed young men, who took them in a robe highly decorated and carried them to a large council-house, where they were placed on a dressed buffalo-skin by the side of the grand chief. The hall or council-room was in the shape of three-quarters of a circle, covered at the top and sides with skins well-dressed and sewed together. Under this shelter sat about seventy men, forming a circle round the chief, before whom were placed a Spanish flag and the one we had given them yesterday. This left a vacant circle of about six feet in diameter, in which the pipe of peace was raised on two forked sticks, about six or eight inches from the ground, and under it the down of the swan was scattered. A large fire, in which they were cooking provisions, stood near, and in the centre were about four hundred pounds of buffalo meat designed as a present to us. As soon as we were seated, an old man got up, and after approving what we had done, begged us to take pity on their unfortunate situation. To this we replied with assurances of protection. After he had ceased, the great chief rose and delivered a harangue to the same effect; then with great solemnity he took some of the most delicate parts of the dog which was cooked for the festival, and held it to the flag by way of sacrifice; this done, he held up the pipe of peace, and first pointed it to the heavens, then to the four quarters of the globe, then to the earth, made a short speech, lighted the pipe, and presented it to us. We smoked, and he again harangued his people, after which the

repast was served up to us. It consisted of the dog which they had just been cooking, this being a great dish among the Sioux and used on all festivals; to this were added pemitigon (pemmican), a dish made of buffalo meat, dried or jerked, and then pounded and mixed raw with grease and a kind of ground potato, dressed like the preparation of Indian corn called hominy, to which it is little inferior. Of all these luxuries, which were placed before us in platters with horn spoons, we took the pemitigon and the potatoes, which we found good, though we could as yet partake but sparingly of the dog."

This characteristic Indian feast and palaver ended with a tribal dance, which lasted until midnight, when the white guests took leave of their Teton entertainers. Next day, after being mulcted of more tobacco, which the young braves of the tribe wanted, the Expedition was permitted, without further molestation, to proceed on the journey up the river. At this point in the narrative, the Lewis and Clark "Journal" supplies an interesting account of the Teton band of the Sioux nation, their customs, manners, and personal appearance, which we extract for the benefit of the curious modern-day reader:

"In their persons, the Tetons," relates the explorer-chroniclers, "are rather ugly and ill-made, their legs and arms being too small, their cheekbones high, and their eyes projecting. The females, with the same character of form, are more handsome; and both sexes appear cheerful and sprightly; though in our intercourse with them we discovered that they were cunning and vicious. . . . The men shave

the hair off their heads, except a small tuft on the top, which they suffer to grow, and wear in plaits over the shoulders; to this they seem much attached, as the loss of it is the usual sacrifice at the death of near relations. In full dress, the men of consideration wear a hawk's feather, or calumet feather worked with porcupine quills, and fastened to the top of the head, from which it falls back. The face and body are generally painted with a mixture of grease and coal. Over the shoulders is a loose robe or mantle of buffalo skin dressed white, adorned with porcupine quills, loosely fixed, so as to make a jingling noise when in motion, and painted with various uncouth figures, unintelligible to us, but to them emblematic of military exploits or any other incident. The hair of the robe is worn next the skin in fair weather, but when it rains the hair is put outside, and the robe is either thrown over the arm or wrapped round the body, all of which it may cover. Under this, in the winter season, they wear a kind of shirt resembling ours, made either of skin or cloth, and covering the arms and body. Round the middle is fixed a girdle of cloth, or procured dressed elk-skin, about a foot wide, which passes between the legs, to this is attached a piece of cloth, blanket, or skin, about a foot wide, which passes between the legs, and is tucked under the girdle both before and behind. From the hip to the ankle is covered by leggings of dressed antelope skins, with seams at the sides two inches in width, and ornamented by little tufts of hair, the product of the scalps they have taken in war, which are scattered down the leg.

The winter moccasins are of dressed buffalo skin, the hair being worn inward, and soled with thick elk-skin parchment; those for summer are of deer or elk-skin, dressed without the hair, and with soles of elk-skin. On great occasions, or whenever they are in full dress, the young men drag after them the entire skin of a polecat fastened to the heel of the moccasin. Another skin, of the same animal, either tucked into the girdle or carried in the hand, serves as a pouch for their tobacco, or what the French traders call *bois roule* (rolled wood). This is the inner bark of a species of red willow, which, being dried in the sun or over the fire, is rubbed between the hands and broken into small pieces, and used alone or mixed with tobacco. The pipe is generally of red earth, the stem made of ash, about three or four feet long, and highly decorated with feathers, hair, and porcupine quills."

With a measure of relief at getting out of the Teton country, the Expedition, which even now was pursued by menacing bands of its late entertainers, reached the village of the Ricara or Rickaree, situate some little distance beyond what is now known as the mining region of the Black Hills, several days' journey from the district of Deadwood, in North Dakota. On the way was passed the *Chien,* or Dog River, near the habitat of the Cheyenne Indians, where the "grizzly" of the Rockies were first met with and described, and where the weather began to get cool, for the month of October had come, and white frosts were the morning greetings at the high elevations the exploring party had reached. The

Rickaree were agreeably found to be amicable and trustful, and readily met the Expedition commanders in friendly conference. Unlike the Yanktons and other Indian tribes hitherto met with, the Ricara eschewed the use of spirituous liquors and could not be tempted to touch them. The pow-wow with them was, nevertheless, most satisfactory; while they appeared content, and indeed delighted, with the gifts distributed to their representative men and warrior chiefs. It is related that the tribe was particularly attracted by Captain Clark's negro servant and flocked about him as an unusual curiosity. As an uncommon sight also to the tribe, their chiefs looked on, and with compassion, at the punishment, by lashes, of a mutinous white soldier, who had at this time to bear the penalty of his fractiousness, after due trial by court-martial. Their consideration for the soldier, it seems, was due to the fact that the seniors of the tribe never make use of corporal punishment, and never whip offenders among their young, though when apprised of the soldier's offence they acknowledged the justice of his punishment, and added, that in their case they would, instead of whipping the culprit, have put him to death.

The close of the month of October brought the Expedition to the Mandan country, lying between the Cannon Ball and the Heart Rivers, both of which find their outlets in the Missouri, the latter stream having its exit where now stands Mandan City, close to Bismarck, the present capital of the State of North Dakota. Here, one thousand six hundred miles from St. Louis, the party selected with care a

camping-place for the winter, now approaching, and proceeded to put up suitable log cabins for the shelter of the force and to erect Fort Mandan for the common defence. In this they were encouraged by the hospitality of the Mandan Indians and their allies of the Minnetaree tribe who occupied the region, as well as by the abundance of game in the vicinity, including deer, antelope, pelicans, and buffaloes. Aside from the scientific objects of the Expedition, which were to engage the savants of the party during the winter months, there was much to occupy all ranks in preparing for the undertakings of the Spring, and especially in building canoes and light craft for passage over shallower waters, it being designed to despatch the large batteau back to St. Louis, since it was too unwieldly for portaging, and of too deep a draught for the headwaters of the Missouri. Though encamped in a fortified post, the exploring party had little to fear from Indian enemies during their prolonged halt, for they got on well with the Mandans, who were not now the strong tribe they once were, having lost numbers by repeated visitations of smallpox, as well as by long existing strife with their Sioux brethren lower down the river. Nor had the Minnetarees their old-time strength of forces, and so were not likely to give trouble to the whites; though they had an unscrupulous, rascally chief in the one-eyed despot, Le Borgne, whose ferocity and bloodthirstiness had given him an evil name in the region. As a past-master in the arts of extortion and low cunning, the whites were under the necessity of keeping a close watch upon him;

though their disposition, very properly, was to have as little as possible to do with him.

Not a little trouble was given the Expedition during the winter, which was an unduly severe one, by having to protect their Mandan friends from the attacks not only of other and stronger tribes who love to prey upon weaker ones, but from the depredations of thievish bands of Indians, separated from hunting-parties, who frequent the region in the pursuit of the winter game. The stealing of horses was the one thing they had frequently to guard the tribe and themselves against; and so common as well as annoying had this become that Captain Clark proposed joint action with the Mandans to put a stop by force of arms to the practice. The proposal, however, was not accepted by the tribe, though the offer, becoming known, had a gratifyingly deterrent effect. One of the chief diversions of the winter, to the exploring party, was an occasional buffalo hunt with their Indian allies. This frequently was full of exciting interest, while, more practically, it supplied the inmates of the fort with plenty of choice game, in addition to gifts of buffalo steaks and venison, which the camp was enabled to send to the Mandan villages. Besides the buffalo hunts, there were the outdoor sports and games frequently indulged in, and that in spite of the extreme coldness of the season—the thermometer often ranging, for many days at a time, from thirty-two to forty degrees below zero. These indulgences caused the winter to pass pleasantly for all; while there was the occasional night's dance with the lasses and young braves of the

neighboring Mandan village to give variety and the spice of fun to the youthful hearts of the Expedition. There were, moreover, the holiday and national-day entertainments to break in on and enliven the tedium of the winter's hard work. Perhaps most interest, however, was taken in buffalo hunts with the Mandans; one such is recorded in the Lewis and Clark "Journal," as having occurred on a cold day in December, when Captain Clark, with fifteen men of the party, by invitation joined the Indians in one of these exciting sports. Here is the manner in which the hunt is set forth:

"The hunters, mounted on horseback and armed with bows and arrows, encircle the herd and gradually drive them into a plain or an open space fit for the movement of horse; they then ride in among them, and singling out a buffalo, a female being preferred, go as close as possible and wound her with arrows till they think they have given the mortal stroke; when they pursue another till the quiver is exhausted. If, which rarely happens, the wounded buffalo attacks the hunter, he evades his blow by the agility of his horse, which is trained for the combat with great dexterity. When they have killed the requisite number they collect their game, and the squaws and attendants come up from the rear and skin and dress the animals. Captain Clark killed ten buffalo, of which five only were brought to the fort, the others, which could not be conveyed home, being seized by the Indians, among whom the custom is that whenever a buffalo is found dead without an arrow or any particular mark, he is the property of

the finder; so that often a hunter secures scarcely any of the game he kills, if the arrow happens to fall off."

In another entry in the "Journal," we are informed that in these hunts the Indians are often joined by their women and children. An instance of this is cited, under date January 13, 1805, when, as the "Journal" relates, "Nearly one-half of the Mandan nation passed down the river to hunt for several days. In these excursions, men, women, and children, with their dogs, all leave the village together, and, after discovering a spot convenient for the game, fix their tents; all the family bear their part in the labor, and the game is equally divided among the families of the tribe. When a single hunter returns from the chase with more than is necessary for his own immediate consumption, the neighbors are entitled by custom to a share of it; they do not, however, ask for it, but send a squaw, who, without saying anything, sits down by the door of the lodge till the master understands the hint, and gives her gratuitously a part for her family."

In the Expedition's sojourn among the Mandans, opportunity, of course, was taken, as in the case of visits to other tribes, to inform the Indians of the new, United States, masters of the territory. In the case of the Mandan tribes, the effect of the news was neutralized in no little degree by the hostility of stray French and English trappers and hunters, with whom the tribe had long had friendly dealings. These hunters were for the most part members of one or other of the two great Fur-trading Companies (the Hudson Bays, and the North-West Fur

Company of Canada), whose operations extended as far south as the Mandan country, and trade with whom the Fur Companies were naturally loth to surrender.

Of this matter, and all other important incidents that had befallen the Expedition since it had set forth on its mission, Messrs. Lewis and Clark were now to send report to Washington, when they despatched the batteau, with an extemporized crew, back to St. Louis. This they did on April 7th (1805), the escorting contingent that had joined the party at St. Louis returning on the barge at the same time. With extracts from the official Journal of the Expedition's proceedings, so far as it had gone, and the scientific reports and collections, advantage was taken of the return of the batteau to forward sundry presents for President Jefferson, consisting of stuffed specimens of the animals of the region, cases of plants, insects, etc., a variety of skins, buffalo robes, and some fine elk-horns, together with a collection of gay articles of Indian attire. These, in due time, reached the national capital, and were much appreciated, not only by the President, but by the curators of the Washington museums, where they were duly mounted, labelled, and placed on exhibition. When this had been done, the Expedition commanders now proceeded to resume their journey, all arrangements for doing so having by this time been completed; while the river was now open after its long winter sleep.

CHAPTER IV

ON THE UPPER MISSOURI TO THE JUNCTION OF THE YELLOWSTONE

THE Expedition, on parting from their comrades returning down the river to St. Louis, were now to set their own faces westward, and be lost to the ken of the outer world until their own return, in September, 1806. The date on which the main party continued their exploring journey from Fort Mandan was April 8th, 1805, almost a year after leaving St. Louis. The interval was an exciting one to the little band of explorers; while it was an anxious one to their friends at home, as well as to President Jefferson and the interested members of his Administration that had seen the Expedition go forth on its thrilling but important mission. With light hearts and high enthusiasm, the little party set out on their enterprise; while all were eager to learn what might befall them in probing their dark and untrodden way over the remaining portions of the journey, across the Great Divide and down the Columbia to the Western Sea. In addition to the original members of the party, the Expedition now took with it a Frenchman interpreter, named Chaboneau, his Indian wife and infant child, the wife having been a captive of the Mandans in a war the

tribe had had with the Snake Indians (the Shoshones) of the Rockies. Both husband and wife were to prove useful acquisitions to the party—the squaw especially so, as she had a gentle disposition, and was greatly attached to the whites, and hence earned much praise for herself from both leaders of the Expedition. Her name, which we shall meet with repeatedly, was Sacajawea, or, in English equivalent, the "Bird Woman." As the Expedition set forth, Captain Lewis, in his Journal, makes the following happy reference to its appearance:

"Our vessels," he observes, "consisted of six small canoes, and two large pirogues. This little fleet, although not quite so respectable as those of Columbus or Captain Cook, were still viewed by us with as much pleasure as those deservedly famed adventurers ever beheld theirs; and I daresay with quite as much anxiety for their safety and preservation. We were now about to penetrate a country at least two thousand miles in width, on which the foot of civilized man had never trodden; the good or evil it had in store for us was for experiment yet to determine, and these little vessels contained every article by which we were to expect to subsist or defend ourselves. However, as the state of mind in which we are, generally gives the coloring to events, when the imagination is suffered to wander into futurity, the picture which now presented itself to me was a most pleasing one. Entertaining as I do the most confident hope of succeeding in a voyage which had formed a darling project of mine for the last ten years, I could but

esteem this moment of our departure as among the most happy of my life."

The undertaking, dear as we are told it was, to the chief leader of the Expedition, was nevertheless a serious and laborious one, as was further to be found in traversing the long and weary distance that still lay between the Upper Missouri waters and the sea. There was, however, much that was novel, as well as interesting, to the explorers as they advanced; and minute was their observation of everything they saw, not only of the physical conformation and resources of the country they passed through, but of the variety of Indian and animal life they met with; and of the sport they had in killing the game requisite for their daily sustenance. Of this game, much was new to them, including not only the familiar elk and deer, of which they had had plentiful supplies while at Fort Mandan; but also the "grizzlies" of the near-by Rockies, the burrowing gopher, mountain antelope, buffalo, beaver, otter, and the Canada wild goose, which, in these high Western latitudes, they now met large flocks of. The comparative nearness to the northern international boundary line brought the party not only to a knowledge of the Canada beaver and wild goose, but also to stray bands of the Assiniboine, of the far north, who were accustomed at this era to extend their hunting expeditions as far south as the country of the Dakotas. Of this tribe, the Assiniboines, the cruelty of which the Expedition, on its passage up the Missouri, had heard rueful tales of, the party was fortunate not to meet at

close range with. The beaver and geese they did, however, meet many of, and to the delectation of all at meal-time; the beaver, as related in the explorers' Journal, being in this part of the Missouri very plentiful, and not only met with "in greater quantities, but of a larger and fatter kind; while their fur was more abundant, and of a darker color, than any hitherto seen."

By this time, the explorers had ascended the Missouri for some little distance, though they had made comparatively slow progress on the whole, in consequence of prevailing head-winds; while the heat, early as it was in the season, was oppressive, though before the end of April it grew cool again, and in the early mornings a hard, white frost was visible on the river's banks. As the party advanced, we are told that many of its members now suffered from inflamed eyes, the result of exposure to the fine alkaline dust which blows over the dry, arid region the Expedition was now passing by, the habitat of the juniper tree, dwarf cedar, and wild sage bush. Here, the "Journal," under date April 14th, gives us an account of the appearance of the country and its characteristic animal and plant life, as follows:

"The river continues wide and of about the same rapidity as the ordinary current of the Ohio. The low grounds are wide, the moister parts containing timber; the upland is extremely broken, without wood, and in some places seems as if it had slipped down in masses of several acres in surface. The mineral appearance of salts, coal, and sulphur, with the burnt hill and pumice-stone, continue, and a

bituminous water about the color of strong lye, with the taste of Glauber's salts and a slight tincture of alum. Many geese were feeding on the prairies, and a number of magpies, which build their nests much like those of the blackbird, in trees, and composed of small sticks, leaves, and grass, open at the top; the egg is of a bluish-brown color, freckled with reddish-brown spots. We also killed a large hooting-owl resembling that of the United States, except that it was more booted and clad with feathers. On the hills are many aromatic herbs, resembling in taste, smell, and appearance the sage, hyssop, wormwood, southernwood, juniper, and dwarf cedar; a plant also about two or three feet high, similar to the camphor in smell and taste (? wild sage); and another plant of the same size, with a long, narrow, smooth, soft leaf, of an agreeable smell and flavor, which is a favorite of the antelope, whose necks are often perfumed by rubbing against it." . . . "The country to-day (*vide* the Journal of April 18th) presented the usual variety of highlands interspersed with rich plains. In one of these we observed a species of pea bearing a yellow flower, which is now in blossom, the leaf and stalk resembling the common pea. It seldom rises higher than six inches, and the root is perennial. On the rosebushes we also saw a quantity of the hair of a buffalo, which had become perfectly white by exposure and resembled the wool of the sheep, except that it was much finer and more soft and silky. A buffalo which we killed yesterday had shed his long hair, and that which remained was about two inches long,

thick, fine, and would have furnished five pounds of wool, of which we have no doubt an excellent cloth might be made. Our game to-day was a beaver, a deer, an elk, and some geese."

The Expedition, by the indications in the current of the river, now began to near the great watercourse which the French called the Jaune, or Yellow, River. Hitherto, what is now known as the Yellowstone, which, rising in the Rockies, in the northwestern section of Wyoming, and, after a course of one thousand two hundred, or one thousand three hundred miles, flows through Montana and joins the Missouri in North Dakota near the frontier of Montana, was practically unknown, though it had been heard of from Indian hunters and stray voyageurs, and was now about to be reached and ascended a few miles by the explorers. Here the party encamped for a little while at the foot of the bluffs, at the junction of the two rivers, the navigation of the Missouri at this point being slow and toilsome, on account of the rapidity of the current and having to avoid the sandbars which here bestrew the river. Game was here found plentiful, though the party only killed what was necessary for immediate subsistence. "For several days past," observes the Journal under date April 27, "we have seen great numbers of buffalo lying dead along the shore, some of them partly devoured by the wolves. They have either sunk through the ice during the winter, or been drowned in attempting to cross; or else, after crossing to some high bluff, have found themselves too much exhausted either to ascend or swim back again

and perished for want of food; in this situation we found several small parties of them. There are geese, too, in abundance, and more bald eagles than we have hitherto observed; the nests of these last being always accompanied by those of two or three magpies, who are their inseparable attendants."

CHAPTER V

AMONG WOLVES, GRIZZLIES, AND BUFFALO, TO THE FALLS OF THE MISSOURI

After passing the entrance of the Yellowstone, the Expedition proceeded onward, up the now muddy Missouri, which from its many rapids and other obstructions in the stream the party found the passage toilsome and fatiguing. Here, in many parts of the river, the boats, they found, could not be propelled with the oars, and hence they were necessitated to draw them with tow-lines from the banks. The difficulties of navigation were, however, in much measure relieved by the sport found in the region, the game here, in the neighborhood of the foot-hills of the Rockies which they had now reached, being increasingly plentiful and at times excitingly risky to kill. This was especially the case in encounters with bruin, one of which is described in the Journal at the close of April (1805). Here is the record of the previous day's sport:

"Captain Lewis, who was on shore with one hunter, met, about eight o'clock, two white bears. Of the strength and ferocity of these animals the Indians had given us dreadful accounts. They never attack the bear but in parties of six or eight persons, and even then are often defeated with a loss of one or more of their party. Having no weapons but bows

and arrows, and the bad guns with which the traders supply them, they are obliged to approach very near to the bear; as no wound except through the head or heart is mortal, they frequently fall a sacrifice if they miss their aim. He rather attacks than avoids a man, and such is the terror which he has inspired, that the Indians who go in quest of him paint themselves, and perform all the superstitious rites customary when they make war on a neighboring nation. Hitherto, those bears we had seen did not appear desirous of encountering us; but although to a skilful rifleman the danger is much diminished, yet the white bear is still a terrible animal. On approaching these two, both Captain Lewis and the hunter fired, and each wounded a bear. One of them made his escape; the other turned upon Lewis and pursued him seventy or eighty yards, but being badly wounded the bear could not run so fast as to prevent him from reloading his piece, which he again aimed at him, and a third shot from the hunter brought him to the ground. He was a male, not quite full grown, and weighed about three hundred pounds. The legs are somewhat longer than those of the black bear, and the talons and tusks are much larger and longer. Its color is a yellowish-brown; the eyes are small, black, and piercing; the front of the forelegs near the feet is usually black, and the fur is finer, thicker, and deeper than that of the black bear. Add to which, it is a more furious animal, and very remarkable for the wounds which it will bear without dying."

The other game met with in the region included

elk, deer, buffalo, beaver, porcupine, and antelope, together with ducks, geese, and some swans. Wolves were also met with, of the variety now known as the coyote, a fleet, sly, but in the main cowardly, animal. Here is the Journal's observations on them:

"The ears are large, erect, and pointed; the head is long and also pointed, like that of the fox; the tail long and bushy; the hair and fur are of a pale reddish-brown color, though much coarser than that of the fox; the eye is of a deep sea-green color, small and piercing; the talons are rather longer than those of the wolf of the Atlantic States, which animal, as far as we can perceive, is not to be found on this side of the Platte. These wolves usually associate in bands of ten or twelve, and are rarely, if ever, seen alone, not being able singly to attack a deer or antelope. They live and rear their young in burrows, which they fix near some pass or spot much frequented by game, and sally out in a body against any animal which they think they can overpower; but on the slightest alarm retreat to their burrows, making a noise exactly like that of a small dog. . . . A second species is lower, shorter in the legs, and thicker than the Atlantic wolf; the color, which is not affected by the seasons, is of every variety of shade, from a gray or blackish-brown to a cream-colored white. They do not burrow, nor do they bark, but howl; they frequent the woods and plains, and skulk along the skirts of the buffalo herds, in order to attack the weary or wounded."

By this time, the explorers, being now well within

the Montana country, their interest was turned towards the great elevations of the Rocky Mountains, whose crests Captain Lewis had seen from a high hill he ascended, and which then lay afar off on the western horizon. By about the middle of June, the Expedition reached the Great Falls of the Missouri, whose roar had been heard for some time before the party confronted the mighty spectacle. The river here "descends the mountain side about three hundred and sixty feet in the course of sixteen miles. There are four distinct cataracts," states an historical authority (Prof. H. W. Elson, in his "Side Lights on American History"), "the largest being a leap of eighty-seven feet over a perpendicular wall. Between the cataracts are rapids where the water leaps and rages as if possessed by evil spirits. Far above the mad, seething river rises a cloud of rainbow-tinted spray, which floats peacefully away over the forest until dissolved into air by the sun. On reaching the Great Falls the party were obliged to carry their canoes for eighteen miles, when they again made use of the river. After a journey of one hundred and forty-one miles from the Falls they reach a place where the Missouri breaks through great mountain walls many hundred feet in height, and they call it the 'Gates of the Rocky Mountains.' They are still four hundred miles from the source of the river, and their journey continues."

Before coming to the Great Falls of the Missouri, the Expedition had passed the Porcupine, Milk, and Dry River streams, the two first named falling into the Missouri from the north, and the latter from the

south. Beyond these rivers, they came to one which the explorers named the Marie, and which for a time they mistook for the main river of the Missouri. They finally took the direct course of the stream, stopping for a time here to *cache* such deep-draught boats as they could not now use or handily portage, and such other articles as they could dispense with on the remainder of the journey. Of the great spectacle of the Falls of the Missouri, we naturally get a glowing description in the pages of the Lewis and Clark "Journal." This stupendous object, which delighted all by its sublimity, is spoken of by the explorers as one which "since the creation had been lavishing its magnificence upon the desert, unknown to civilization."

"The river immediately at the cascades," observes the writer, "is three hundred yards wide, and is pressed in by a perpendicular cliff on the left, which rises to about one hundred feet and extends up the stream for a mile; on the right the bluff is also perpendicular for three hundred yards above the Falls. For ninety or one hundred yards from the left cliff, the water falls in one smooth, even sheet, over a precipice of at least eighty feet. The remaining part of the river precipitates itself with a more rapid current, but being received as it falls by the irregular and somewhat projecting rocks below, forms a splendid prospect of perfectly white foam, two hundred yards in length and eighty in perpendicular elevation. This spray is dissipated into a thousand shapes, sometimes flying up in columns of fifteen or twenty feet, which are then oppressed by larger masses of

the white foam, on all of which the sun impresses the brightest colors of the rainbow. Below the Falls the water beats with fury against a ledge of rocks, which extends across the river at one hundred and fifty yards from the precipice. From the perpendicular cliff on the north to the distance of one hundred and twenty yards, the rocks are only a few feet above the water; and, when the river is high, the stream finds a channel across them forty yards wide, and near the higher parts of the ledge, which rise about twenty feet, and terminate abruptly within eighty or ninety yards of the southern side. Between them and the perpendicular cliff on the south, the whole body of water runs with great swiftness. A few small cedars grow near this ridge of rocks, which serves as a barrier to defend a small plain of about three acres, shaded with cottonwood; at the lower extremity of which is a grove of the same trees, where are several deserted Indian cabins of sticks; below which the river is divided by a large rock, several feet above the surface of the water, and extending down the stream for twenty yards. At the distance of three hundred yards from the same ridge is a second abutment of solid perpendicular rock, about sixty feet high, projecting at right angles from the small plain on the north for one hundred and thirty-four yards into the river. After leaving this, the Missouri again spreads itself to its previous breadth of three hundred yards, though with more than its ordinary rapidity."

Of the rapids above the Falls, Captain Lewis gives us an account in the "Journal." In it he relates that:

"After passing one continued rapid and three cascades, each three or four feet high, he reached, at the distance of five miles, a second fall. The river is here about four hundred yards wide, and for the distance of three hundred feet rushes down to the depth of nineteen feet, and so irregularly that he gave it the name of the Crooked Falls. From the southern shore it extends obliquely upward about one hundred and fifty yards, and then forms an acute angle downward nearly to the commencement of four small islands close to the northern side. From the perpendicular pitch to these islands, a distance of more than one hundred yards, the water glides down a sloping rock with a velocity almost equal to that of its fall: above this fall the river bends suddenly to the northward. While viewing this place, Captain Lewis heard a loud roar above him, and, crossing the point of a hill a few hundred yards, he saw one of the most beautiful objects in nature: the whole Missouri is suddenly stopped by one shelving rock, which, without a single niche, and with an edge as straight and regular as if formed by art, stretches itself from one side of the river to the other for at least a quarter of a mile. Over this it precipitates itself in an even, uninterrupted sheet, to the perpendicular depth of fifty feet, whence, dashing against the rocky bottom, it rushes rapidly down, leaving behind it a sheet of the purest foam across the river. The scene which it presented was indeed singularly beautiful; since, without any of the wild, irregular sublimity of the lower falls, it combined all the regular elegancies which the fancy of a painter would select to form a

beautiful waterfall. The eye had scarcely been regaled with this charming prospect, when at the distance of half a mile Captain Lewis observed another of a similar kind. To this he immediately hastened, and found a cascade stretching across the whole river for a quarter of a mile, with a descent of fourteen feet, though the perpendicular pitch was only six feet. This, too, in any other neighborhood, would have been an object of great magnificence; but after what he had just seen, it became of secondary interest. His curiosity being, however, awakened, he determined to go on, even should night overtake him, to the head of the falls.

"He therefore pursued the southwest course of the river, which was one constant succession of rapids and small cascades, at every one of which the bluffs grew lower, or the bed of the river became more on a level with the plains. At the distance of two and one-half miles he arrived at another cataract, of twenty-six feet. The river is here six hundred yards wide, but the descent is not immediately perpendicular, though the river falls generally with a regular and smooth sheet; for about one-third of the descent a rock protrudes to a small distance, receives the water in its passage, and gives it a curve. On the south side is a beautiful plain, a few feet above the level of the falls; on the north, the country is more broken, and there is a hill not far from the river. Just below the falls is a little island in the middle of the river, well covered with timber. Here on a cottonwood tree an eagle had fixed her nest, and seemed the undisputed mistress of a spot, to contest

whose dominion neither man nor beast would venture across the gulfs that surround it, and which is further secured by the mist rising from the falls. This solitary bird could not escape the observation of the Indians, who made the eagle's nest a part of their description of the falls, which now proves to be correct in almost every particular, except that they did not do justice to the height.

"Just above this is a cascade of about five feet, beyond which, as far as could be discerned, the velocity of the water seemed to abate. Captain Lewis now ascended the hill which was behind him, and saw from its top a delightful plain, extending from the river to the base of the Snowy [Rocky] Mountains to the south and southwest. Along this wide, level country the Missouri pursued its winding course, filled with water to its smooth, grassy banks, while about four miles above, it was joined by a large river flowing from the northwest, through a valley three miles in width, and distinguished by the timber which adorned its shores. The Missouri itself stretches to the south, in one unruffled stream of water, as if unconscious of the roughness it must soon encounter, and bearing on its bosom vast flocks of geese, while numerous herds of buffalo are feeding on the plains which surround it.

"Captain Lewis then descended the hill, and directed his course towards the river falling in from the west. He soon met a herd of at least a thousand buffalo, and, being desirous of providing for supper, shot one of them. The animal immediately began to bleed, and Captain Lewis, who had forgotten to

reload his rifle, was intently watching to see him fall, when he beheld a large brown bear which was stealing on him unperceived, and was already within twenty steps. In the first moment of surprise he lifted his rifle; but, remembering instantly that it was not charged, and that he had no time to reload, he felt that there was no safety but in flight. It was in the open, level plain; not a bush nor a tree within three hundred yards; the bank of the river sloping, and not more than three feet high, so that there was no possible mode of concealment. Captain Lewis, therefore, thought of retreating with a quick walk, as fast as the bear advanced, towards the nearest tree; but, as soon as he turned, the bear rushed open-mouthed, and at full speed, upon him. Captain Lewis ran about eighty yards, but finding that the animal gained on him fast, it flashed on his mind that, by getting into the water to such a depth that the bear would be obliged to attack him swimming, there was still some chance of his life; he therefore turned short, plunged into the river about waist-deep, and facing about presented the point of his espontoon. The bear arrived at the water's edge within twenty feet of him; but as soon as he put himself in this posture of defence, the bear seemed frightened, and wheeling about, retreated with as much precipitation as he had pursued. Very glad to be released from this danger, Captain Lewis returned to the shore, and observed him run with great speed, sometimes looking back as if he expected to be pursued, till he reached the woods. He could not conceive the cause of the sudden alarm of the bear, but con-

gratulated himself on his escape when he saw his own track torn to pieces by the furious animal, and learned from the whole adventure never to suffer his rifle to be a moment unloaded."

Some time was consumed in the vicinity of the Great Falls of the Missouri, occasioned by having to portage the party and its effects about eighteen miles, so as to overcome the cascades and rapids of the river, as well as to give the final touches to a boat of stout skins, the frame of which they had brought with them from St. Louis for the later purposes of the journey. It was well on in July (1805) before all was ready for the continued transportation, as far as the now shallow and tortuous waters of the Missouri would carry them, to the point where they would have to cross the Great Divide and seek the Columbia River, on which they designed to push their way finally to the Pacific.

CHAPTER VI

AT THE SOURCES OF THE MISSOURI, TO THE FOOT OF THE "GREAT DIVIDE"

After once more getting under way, the Expedition's progress was at first slow, owing to the obstacles encountered in navigating the waters of the Upper Missouri. What these obstacles were, we learn from the "Journal," from which we have often and largely quoted. Under date, July 17, it informs us that "the navigation is now very laborious. The river is deep, but with little current, and from seventy to one hundred yards wide; the low grounds are very narrow, with but little timber, and that chiefly the aspen tree. The cliffs are steep, and hang over the river so much that often we could not cross them, but were obliged to pass and repass from one side of the river to the other, in order to make our way. In some places the banks are formed of dark or black granite, rising perpendicularly to a great height, through which the river seems, in the progress of time, to have worn its channel. On these mountains we see more pine than usual, but it is still in small quantities. Along the bottoms, which have a covering of high grass, we observed the sunflower blooming in great abundance. The Indians of the

Missouri, more especially those who do not cultivate maize, make great use of the seed of this plant for bread, or in thickening their soup. They first parch and then pound it between two stones, until it is reduced to a fine meal. Sometimes they add a portion of water, and drink it thus diluted; at other times they add a sufficient proportion of marrow-grease to reduce it to the consistency of common dough, and eat it in that manner. This last composition we preferred to all the rest, and thought it at that time a very palatable dish."

The Expedition commanders were now anxious about the means of getting over the barrier of the Rockies, as well as to procure guides and horses for the land journey. For some time back they had seen no Indians; but the woman of their party, Sacajawea, who on the way up had been, and repeatedly, of the highest service to the Expedition, now told them that they were then nearing the country of the Snake Indians, or Shoshones, from which tribe she many years ago had been stolen as a child. There, she informed Lewis and Clark, they would be sure to find both guides and horses, were they able to hail and speak with her people. To prove that she remembered her old home and that she knew that the party were now nearing it, Sacajawea told the leaders that they would presently arrive at a distinctive and characteristic part of the river, known as the Three Forks of the Missouri; and here, true enough, they found themselves on July 25th—the streams being respectively named by Lewis and Clark the Jefferson, the Madison, and the Gallatin, in honor of

the President, the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of the Treasury, in the Jefferson Administration. Another cause of anxiety to the party leaders at this juncture was the desire to get among some Indian tribes with whom they might do a little trading, for of late the Expedition's larder had been but scantily supplied, game so far north being somewhat scarce, and what they had had the party *chefs* had not been frugal in the use of. "Nothing," records the "Journal" (July 31), "was killed to-day; nor have we had any fresh meat except one beaver for the last two days; so that we are now reduced to an unusual situation, for we have hitherto always had a great abundance of flesh. . . . When we have plenty of fresh meat," the writer complains, "I find it impossible to make the men take any care of it, or use it with the least frugality, though I expect that necessity will shortly teach them this art."

The anxiety as to the provender question was for the time allayed by the success of the Expedition's hunters in killing two deer, on which the party, after their fast, feasted sumptuously, with, we are told, a dessert of currants and choke-berries, besides "some wild onions of good flavor and size." The desire of the party leaders to fall in with the Shoshones was also somewhat set at rest, as the "Journal" relates, by further evidence of the squaw's recognizing as familiar to her the region they are now passing. "We are delighted to find," states the "Journal," "that the Indian woman recognizes the country; she tells us that here (at a creek near by) her countrymen make excursions to procure white paint on its

banks. We therefore call it White-Earth Creek. She says also that the Three Forks of the Missouri are at no great distance," as had already been ascertained. The " Journal " adds, under date July 27th: " We are now very anxious to see the Snake Indians. After advancing for several hundred miles into this wild and mountainous country we may soon expect that the game will abandon us. With no information of the route, we may be unable to find a passage across the mountains when we reach the head of the river (the Missouri)—at least, such a pass as will lead us to the Columbia. Even were we so fortunate as to find a branch of that river, the timber which we have hitherto seen in the mountains does not promise us any fit to make canoes, so that our chief dependence is on meeting some tribe from whom we may procure horses. Our consolation is that this southwest branch (the Jefferson) can scarcely head with any other river than the Columbia; and that if any nation of Indians can live in the mountains we are able to endure as much as they can, and have even better means of procuring subsistence."

A day or two after this, the " Journal " makes the following further reference to the squaw and her early recollections of her old home among the Shoshone or Snake Indians:

" Sacajawea, our Indian woman, informs us that we are encamped on the precise spot where her countrymen, the Snake Indians, had their huts five years ago, when the Minnetarees of Knife River first came in sight of them, and from which they hastily retreated three miles up the Jefferson, and

concealed themselves in the woods. The Minnetarees, however, pursued and attacked them, killed four men, as many women, and a number of boys; and made prisoners of four other boys, and all the females, of whom Sacajawea was one; she does not, however, show any distress at these recollections, nor any joy at the prospect of being restored to her country; for she seems to possess the folly or the philosophy of not suffering her feelings to extend beyond the anxiety of having plenty to eat and a few trinkets to wear."

The Expedition, meanwhile, continued briskly on its way, a good lookout being kept for any signs of Indian life in the neighborhood, that the party might procure what they now urgently wanted—guides and horses. Here the "Journal," on the 8th of August, chronicles that:

"On our right is the point of a high plain, which our Indian woman recognizes as the place called the Beaver's-head from a supposed resemblance to that object. This she says is not far from the summer retreat of her countrymen, which is on a river beyond the mountains, and running to the west. She is therefore certain that we shall meet them either on this river, or on that immediately west of its source, which, judging from its present size, cannot be far distant. Persuaded of the absolute necessity of procuring horses to cross the mountains, it was determined that one of us should proceed in the morning to the head of the river, and penetrate the mountains till he found the Shoshones or some other nation who could assist us in transporting our bag-

gage, the greater part of which we shall be compelled to leave without the aid of horses."

On the 11th of the month (August), Captain Lewis, then being ashore on his hunt for some trace of the Shoshones, finally perceived an Indian on horseback at the distance of two miles coming down the plain toward him, and his two companions (Drewyer and Shields) who were with him. Unfortunately, in this first encounter with the natives of the region, Lewis, as it will be seen, was not successful in getting near the Indians for a parley. That desired object was, however, to be gained a little later.

"On examining him (the Indian) with the glass, Captain Lewis saw that he was of a different nation from any Indians we had hitherto met; he was armed with a bow and a quiver of arrows; mounted on an elegant horse without a saddle, and a small string attached to the under jaw answered as a bridle. Convinced that he was a Shoshone, and knowing how much of our success depended on the friendly offices of that nation, Captain Lewis was full of anxiety to approach without alarming him, and endeavor to convince him that he was a white man. He, therefore, proceeded on towards the Indian at his usual pace, when they were within a mile of each other the Indian suddenly stopped, Captain Lewis immediately followed his example, took his blanket from his knapsack, and holding it with both hands at the two corners, threw it above his head and unfolded it as he brought it to the ground as if in the act of spreading it. This signal which originates in

the practice of spreading a robe or a skin, as a seat for guests to whom they wish to show a distinguished kindness, is the universal sign of friendship among the Indians on the Missouri and the Rocky Mountains. As usual, Captain Lewis repeated this signal three times; still the Indian kept his position, and looked with an air of suspicion on Drewyer and Shields who were now advancing on each side. Captain Lewis was afraid to make any signal for them to halt, lest he should increase the suspicions of the Indian, who began to be uneasy, and they were too distant to hear his voice. He, therefore, took from his pack some beads, a looking-glass and a few trinkets, which he had brought for the purpose, and leaving his gun advanced unarmed towards the Indian. He remained in the same position till Captain Lewis came within two hundred yards of him, when he turned his horse, and began to move off slowly; Captain Lewis then called out to him, in as loud a voice as he could, repeating the words *tabba bone!* which in the Shoshone language means white man; but looking over his shoulder the Indian kept his eyes on Drewyer and Shields, who were still advancing, without recollecting the impropriety of doing so at such a moment, till Captain Lewis made a signal to them to halt; this Drewyer obeyed, but Shields did not observe it, and still went forward; seeing Drewyer halt the Indian turned his horse about as if to wait for Captain Lewis who now reached within one hundred and fifty paces, repeating the words *tabba bone,* and holding up the trinkets in his hand, at the same time stripping up the sleeve of his shirt to show

the color of his skin. The Indian suffered him to advance within one hundred paces, then suddenly turned his horse, and giving him the whip, leaped across the creek and disappeared in an instant among the willow bushes; with him vanished all the hopes which the sight of him had inspired of a friendly introduction to his countrymen. Though sadly disappointed by the imprudence of his two men, Captain Lewis determined to make the incident of some use, and therefore calling the men to him they all set off after the track of the horse, which they hoped might lead them to the camp of the Indian who had fled, or if he had given the alarm to any small party, their track might conduct them to the body of the nation. They now fixed a small flag of the United States on a pole, which was carried by one of the men as a signal of their friendly intentions, should the Indians observe them as they were advancing. The route lay across an island formed by a nearly equal division of the creek in the bottom; after reaching the open grounds on the right side of the creek, the track turned towards some high hills about three miles distant. Presuming that the Indian camp might be among these hills, and that by advancing hastily he might be seen and alarm them, Captain Lewis sought an elevated situation near the creek, had a fire made of willow brush, and took breakfast. At the same time he prepared a small assortment of beads, trinkets, awls, some paint and a looking glass, and placed them on a pole near the fire, in order that if the Indians returned they might discover that the party were white men and friends. Whilst making these

preparations a very heavy shower of rain and hail came on, and wet them to the skin; in about twenty minutes it was over, and Captain Lewis then renewed his pursuit, but as the rain had made the grass which the horse had trodden down rise again, his track could with difficulty be distinguished. As they went along they passed several places where the Indians seemed to have been digging roots to-day, and saw the fresh track of eight or ten horses, but they had been wandering about in so confused a manner that he could not discern any particular path, and at last, after pursuing it about four miles along the valley to the left under the foot of the hills, he lost the track of the fugitive Indian. Near the head of the valley they had passed a large bog covered with moss and tall grass, among which were several springs of pure cold water; they now turned a little to the left along the foot of the high hills, and reached a small creek where they encamped for the night, having made about twenty miles, though not more than ten in a direct line from their camp of last evening."

Of the history of the Shoshone tribe, which the Expedition leaders were now in search of, we get in the "Journal" an interesting account, which we here subjoin:

"The Shoshones are a small tribe of the nation called Snake Indians, a vague denomination, which embraces at once the inhabitants of the southern parts of the Rocky Mountains and of the plains on each side. The Shoshones with whom we now are, amount to about one hundred warriors, and three

times that number of women and children. Within their own recollection they formerly lived in the plains, but they have been driven into the mountains by the Pawkees, or the roving Indians of the Sascatchawain (Saskatchewan), and are now obliged to visit occasionally, and by stealth, the country of their ancestors. Their lives are indeed migratory. From the middle of May to the beginning of September, they reside on the waters of the Columbia, where they consider themselves perfectly secure from the Pawkees who have never yet found their way to that retreat. During this time they subsist chiefly on salmon, and as that fish disappears on the approach of autumn, they are obliged to seek subsistence elsewhere. They then cross the ridge to the waters of the Missouri, down which they proceed slowly and cautiously, till they are joined near the three forks by other bands, either of their own nation or of the Flatheads, with whom they associate against the common enemy. Being now strong in numbers, they venture to hunt buffalo in the plains eastward of the mountains, near which they spend the winter, till the return of the salmon invites them to the Columbia. But such is their terror of the Pawkees, that as long as they can obtain the scantiest subsistence, they do not leave the interior of the mountains; and as soon as they collect a large stock of dried meat, they again retreat, and thus alternately obtaining their food at the hazard of their lives, and hiding themselves to consume it. In this loose and wandering existence they suffer the extremes of want; for two-thirds of the year they are forced to live in the mountains,

passing whole weeks without meat, and with nothing to eat but a few fish and roots. Nor can anything be imagined more wretched than their condition at the present time, when the salmon is fast retiring, when roots are becoming scarce, and they have not yet acquired strength to hazard an encounter with their enemies.

"So insensible are they however to these calamities, that the Shoshones are not only cheerful but even gay; and their character, which is more interesting than that of any Indians we have seen, has in it much of the dignity of misfortune. In their intercourse with strangers they are frank and communicative, in their dealings perfectly fair, nor have we had during our stay with them, any reason to suspect that the display of all our new and valuable wealth has tempted them into a single act of dishonesty. While they have generally shared with us the little they possess, they have always abstained from begging anything from us. With their liveliness of temper, they are fond of gaudy dresses, and of all sorts of amusements, particularly games of hazard; and like most Indians fond of boasting of their own warlike exploits, whether real or fictitious. In their conduct towards ourselves, they were kind and obliging, and though on one occasion they seemed willing to neglect us, yet we scarcely knew how to blame the treatment by which we suffered, when we recollected how few civilized chiefs would have hazarded the comforts or the subsistence of their people for the sake of a few strangers. This manliness of character may cause or it may be formed by the nature of

their government, which is perfectly free from any restraint. Each individual is his own master, and the only control to which his conduct is subjected, is the advice of a chief supported by his influence over the opinions of the rest of the tribe. The chief himself is in fact no more than the most confidential person among the warriors, a rank neither distinguished by any external honor, nor invested by any ceremony, but gradually acquired from the good wishes of his companions and by superior merit. Such an officer has therefore strictly no power; he may recommend or advise or influence, but his commands have no effect on those who incline to disobey, and who may at any time withdraw from their voluntary allegiance. His shadowy authority which cannot survive the confidence which supports it, often decays with the personal vigor of the chief, or is transferred to some more fortunate or favorite hero.

"In their domestic economy, the man is equally sovereign. The man is the sole proprietor of his wives and daughters, and can barter them away, or dispose of them in any manner he may think proper. The children are seldom corrected; the boys, particularly, soon become their own masters; they are never whipped, for they say that it breaks their spirit, and that after being flogged they never recover their independence of mind, even when they grow to manhood. A plurality of wives is very common; but these are not generally sisters, as among the Minnetarees and Mandans, but are purchased of different fathers. The infant daughters are often betrothed by the father to men who are grown, either for them-

selves or for their sons, for whom they are desirous of providing wives. The compensation to the father is usually made in horses or mules; and the girl remains with her parents till the age of puberty, which is thirteen or fourteen, when she is surrendered to her husband. At the same time the father often makes a present to the husband equal to what he had formerly received as the price of his daughter, though this return is optional with her parent. Sacajawea had been contracted in this way before she was taken prisoner, and when we brought her back, her betrothed was still living. Although he was double the age of Sacajawea, and had two other wives, he claimed her, but on finding that she had a child by her new husband, Chaboneau, he relinquished his pretensions and said he did not want her.

"The chastity of the women does not appear to be held in much estimation. The husband will for a trifling present lend his wife for a night to a stranger, and the loan may be protracted by increasing the value of the present. Yet strange as it may seem, notwithstanding this facility, any connection of this kind not authorized by the husband, is considered highly offensive and quite as disgraceful to his character as the same licentiousness in civilized societies. The Shoshones are not so importunate in volunteering the services of their wives as we found the Sioux were; and indeed we observed among them some women who appeared to be held in more respect than those of any nation we had seen. But the mass of the females are condemned, as among all savage nations, to the lowest and most laborious drudgery.

When the tribe is stationary, they collect the roots, and cook; they build the huts, dress the skins and make clothing; collect the wood, and assist in taking care of the horses on the route; they load the horses and have the charge of all the baggage. The only business of the man is to fight; he therefore takes on himself the care of his horse, the companion of his warfare; but he will descend to no other labor than to hunt and to fish. He would consider himself degraded by being compelled to walk any distance; and were he so poor as to possess only two horses, he would ride the best of them, and leave the other for his wives and children and their baggage; and if he has too many wives or too much baggage for the horse, the wives have no alternative but to follow him on foot; they are not however often reduced to those extremities, for their stock of horses is very ample. Notwithstanding their losses this Spring they still have at least seven hundred, among which are about forty colts, and half that number of mules. There are no horses here which can be considered as wild; we have seen two only on this side of the Musselshell River which were without owners, and even those, although shy, showed every mark of having been once in the possession of man. The original stock was procured from the Spaniards, but they now raise their own. The horses are generally very fine, of a good size, vigorous and patient of fatigue as well as hunger. Each warrior has one or two tied to a stake near his hut both day and night, so as to be always prepared for action. The mules are obtained in the course of trade from the Spaniards, with

whose brands several of them are marked, or stolen from them by the frontier Indians. They are the finest animals of that kind we have ever seen, and at this distance from the Spanish colonies are very highly valued. The worst are considered as worth the price of two horses, and a good mule cannot be obtained for less than three and sometimes four horses."

CHAPTER VII

AMONG THE SHOSHONES, OR SNAKE INDIANS

PURSUING his search for the Shoshones and their villages, Captain Lewis, accompanied by the two active members of the Expedition (Drewyer and Shields), was fortunate enough, on the 13th of August, to meet with two Indian women, a brave, and several dogs belonging to the tribe. Here is the account supplied in the "Journal" of the rencontre:

"They proceeded along a waving plain parallel to this valley for about four miles, when they discovered two women, a man and some dogs on an eminence at the distance of a mile before them. The strangers first viewed them apparently with much attention for a few minutes, and then two of them sat down as if to await Captain Lewis's arrival. He went on till he reached within about half a mile, then ordered his party to stop, put down his knapsack and rifle, and unfurling the flag advanced alone towards the Indians. The females soon retreated behind the hill, but the man remained till Captain Lewis came within a hundred yards from him, when he too went off, though Captain Lewis called out *tabba bone!* loud enough to be heard distinctly. He hastened to the top of the hill, but they had all dis-

appeared. The dogs however were less shy, and came close to him; he therefore thought of tying a handkerchief with some beads round their necks, and then let them loose to convince the fugitives of his friendly disposition, but they would not suffer him to take hold of them, and soon left him. He now made a signal to the men, who joined him, and then all followed the track of the Indians, which led along a continuation of the same road they had been already travelling. It was dusty and seemed to have been much used lately both by foot passengers and horsemen. They had not gone along it more than a mile when on a sudden they saw three female Indians, from whom they had been concealed by the deep ravines which intersected the road, till they were now within thirty paces of each other; one of them, a young woman, immediately took to flight, the other two, an elderly woman and a little girl, seeing we were too near for them to escape, sat on the ground, and holding down their heads seemed as if reconciled to the death which they supposed awaited them. The same habit of holding down the head and inviting the enemy to strike, when all chance of escape is gone, is preserved in Egypt to this day. Captain Lewis instantly put down his rifle, and advancing towards them, took the woman by the hand, raised her up, and repeated the words *tabba bone!* at the same time stripping up his shirt sleeve to prove that he was a white man, for his hands and face had become by constant exposure quite as dark as their own. She appeared immediately relieved from her alarm, and Drewyer and

Shields now coming up, Captain Lewis gave them some beads, a few awls, pewter mirrors, and a little paint, and told Drewyer to request the woman to recall her companion who had escaped to some distance, and by alarming the Indians might cause them to attack him without any time for explanation. She did as she was desired, and the young woman returned almost out of breath. Captain Lewis gave her an equal portion of trinkets, and painted the tawny cheeks of all three of them with vermillion, a ceremony which among the Shoshones is emblematic of peace.

"After they had become composed, he informed them by signs of his wish to go to their camp in order to see their chiefs and warriors; they readily obeyed, and conducted the party along the same road down the river. In this way they marched two miles, when they met a troop of nearly sixty warriors mounted on excellent horses riding at full speed towards them. As they advanced, Captain Lewis put down his gun, and went with the flag about fifty paces in advance. The chief, who with two men were riding in front of the main body, spoke to the women, who now explained that the party was composed of white men, and showed exultingly the presents they had received. The three men immediately leaped from their horses, came up to Captain Lewis and embraced him with great cordiality, putting their left arm over his right shoulder and clasping his back, applying at the same time their left cheek to his, and frequently vociferating ah hi e! ah hi e! 'I am much pleased, I am much rejoiced.' The whole

body of warriors now came forward, and our men received the caresses, and no small share of the grease and paint, of their new friends. After this fraternal embrace, of which the motive was much more agreeable than the manner, Captain Lewis lighted a pipe and offered it to the Indians who had now seated themselves in a circle around the party. But before they would receive this mark of friendship they pulled off their moccasins, a custom, as we afterwards learnt, which indicates the sacred sincerity of their professions when they smoke with a stranger, and which imprecates on themselves the misery of going barefoot forever if they are faithless to their words, a penalty by no means light to those who rove over the thorny plains of their country.

"After smoking a few pipes, some trifling presents were distributed amongst them, with which they seemed very much pleased, particularly with the blue beads and the vermillion. Captain Lewis then informed the chief that the object of his visit was friendly, and should be explained as soon as he reached their camp; but that in the meantime as the sun was oppressive, and no water near, he wished to go there as soon as possible. They now put on their moccasins, and their chief, whose name was Cameahwait, made a short speech to the warriors. Captain Lewis then gave him the flag, which he informed him was among white men the emblem of peace, and now that he had received it was to be in future the bond of union between them. The chief then moved on, our party followed him, and the rest

of the warriors in a squadron, brought up the rear. After marching a mile they were halted by the chief, who made a second harangue, on which six or eight young men rode forward to their camp, and no further regularity was observed in the order of march. At the distance of four miles from where they had first met, they reached the Indian camp, which was in a handsome level meadow on the bank of the river. Here they were introduced into an old leathern lodge which the young men who had been sent from the party had fitted up for their reception. After being seated on green boughs and antelope skins, one of the warriors pulled up the grass in the centre of the lodge so as to form a vacant circle of two feet diameter, in which he kindled a fire. The chief then produced his pipe and tobacco, the warriors all pulled off their moccasins, and our party was requested to take off their own. This being done, the chief lighted his pipe at the fire within the magic circle, and then retreating from it began a speech several minutes long, at the end of which he pointed the stem towards the four cardinal points of the heavens, beginning with the east and concluding with the north. After this ceremony he presented the stem in the same way to Captain Lewis, who supposing it an invitation to smoke, put out his hand to receive the pipe, but the chief drew it back, and continued to repeat the same offer three times, after which he pointed the stem first to the heavens, then to the centre of the little circle, took three whiffs himself, and presented it again to Captain Lewis. Finding that this last offer was in good

earnest, he smoked a little, the pipe was then held to each of the white men, and after they had taken a few whiffs was given to the warriors. The ceremony of smoking being concluded, Captain Lewis explained to the chief the purposes of his visit, and as by this time all the women and children of the camp had gathered around the lodge to indulge in a view of the first white men they had ever seen, he distributed among them the remainder of the small articles he had brought with him. It was now late in the afternoon, and our party had tasted no food since the night before. On apprising the chief of this circumstance, he said that he had nothing but berries to eat, and presented some cakes made of serviceberry and chokecherries which had been dried in the sun. On these Captain Lewis made a hearty meal, and then walked down towards the river; he found it a rapid clear stream forty yards wide and three feet deep; the banks were low and abrupt, like those of the upper part of the Missouri, and the bed formed of loose stones and gravel. Its course, as far as he could observe, was a little to the north of west, and was bounded on each side by a range of high mountains, of which those on the east are the lowest and most distant from the river.

"The chief informed him that this stream discharged itself at the distance of half-a-day's march, into another of twice its size, coming from the southwest; but added, on further inquiry, that there was scarcely more timber below the junction of those rivers than in this neighborhood, and that the river was rocky, rapid, and so closely confined between

high mountains, that it was impossible to pass down it, either by land or water to the great lake, where as he had understood the white men lived. This information was far from being satisfactory; for there was no timber here that would answer the purpose of building canoes, indeed not more than just sufficient for fuel, and even that consisted of the narrow-leafed cottonwood, the red and the narrow-leafed willow, the chokecherry, serviceberry and a few currant bushes such as are common on the Missouri. The prospect of going on by land is more pleasant; for there are great numbers of horses feeding in every direction round the camp, which will enable us to transport our stores if necessary over the mountains. Captain Lewis returned from the river to his lodge, and on his way an Indian invited him into his bower and gave him a small morsel of boiled antelope and a piece of fresh salmon roasted. This was the first salmon he had seen, and perfectly satisfied him that he was now on the waters of the Pacific."

By this time, news of the coming of the whites among the Shoshones had reached the latter's camp and all were agog with excitement. At first, it had been thought that the arriving Expedition was an Indian one, consisting of the old foes of the tribe, the Minnetarees. They were consequently much alarmed, though when afterward assured of the fact that the newcomers were whites, their delight was as great as was their curiosity to see them. Says the "Journal" at this period (August 17), in relating the account of the meeting and the affecting

interview of Sacajawea with the members of her people:

"The Indians were all transported with joy, and the chief in the warmth of his satisfaction renewed his embrace to Captain Lewis, who was quite as much delighted as the Indians themselves; the report proved most agreeably true. On setting out at seven o'clock, Captain Lewis with Chaboneau and his wife walked on shore, but they had not gone more than a mile before Captain Clark saw Sacajawea, who was with her husband one hundred yards ahead, begin to dance and show every mark of the most extravagant joy, turning round him and pointing to several Indians, whom he now saw advancing on horseback, sucking her fingers at the same time to indicate that they were of her native tribe. As they advanced Captain Clark discovered among them Drewyer dressed like an Indian, from whom he learned the situation of the party. While the boats were performing the circuit, he went towards the forks with the Indians, who, as they went along, sang aloud with the greatest appearance of delight. We soon drew near to the camp, and just as we approached it a woman made her way through the crowd towards Sacajawea, and, recognising each other, they embraced with the most tender affection. The meeting of these two young women had in it something peculiarly touching, not only in the ardent manner in which their feelings were expressed, but from the real interest of their situation. They had been companions in childhood, in the war with the Minnetarees they had both been taken prisoners in

the same battle, they had shared and softened the rigors of their captivity, till one of them had escaped from the Minnetarees, with scarce a hope of ever seeing her friend relieved from the hands of her enemies.

"While Sacajawea was renewing among the women the friendships of former days, Captain Clark went on and was received by Captain Lewis and the chief, who, after the first embraces and salutations were over, conducted him to a sort of circular tent or shade of willows. Here he was seated on a white robe; and the chief immediately tied in his hair six small shells resembling pearls, an ornament highly valued by these people, who procured them in the course of trade from the seacoast. The moccasins of the whole party were then taken off, and after much ceremony the smoking began. After this the conference was to be opened, and glad of an opportunity of being able to converse more intelligibly, Sacajawea was sent for; she came into the tent, sat down, and was beginniing to interpret, when in the person of Cameahwait she recognized her brother: she instantly jumped up, and ran and embraced him, throwing over him her blanket and weeping profusely; the chief was himself moved, though not in the same degree. After some conversation between them she resumed her seat, and attempted to interpret for us, but her new situation seemed to overpower her, and she was frequently interrupted by her tears. After the council was finished, the unfortunate woman learnt that all her family were dead except two brothers, one of whom

was absent, and a son of her eldest sister, a small boy, who was immediately adopted by her. The canoes arriving soon after, we formed a camp in a meadow on the left side, a little below the forks; took out our baggage, and by means of our sails and willow poles formed a canopy for our Indian visitors. About four o'clock the chiefs and warriors were collected, and after the customary ceremony of taking off the moccasins and smoking a pipe, we explained to them in a long harangue the purposes of our visit, making themselves one conspicuous object of the good wishes of our Government, on whose strength as well as its friendly disposition we expatiated. We told them of their dependence on the willof our Government for all future supplies of whatever was necessary either for their comfort or defense; that as we were sent to discover the best route by which merchandise could be conveyed to them, and no trade would be begun before our return, it was mutually advantageous that we should proceed with as little delay as possible; that we were under the necessity of requesting them to furnish us with horses to transport our baggage across the mountains, and a guide to show us the route, but that they should be amply remunerated for their horses, as well as for every other service they should render us. In the meantime our first wish was, that they should immediately collect as many horses as were necessary to transport our baggage to their village, where, at our leisure we would trade with them for as many horses as they could spare.

"The speech made a favorable impression; the chief in reply thanked us for our expressions of friendship towards himself and his nation, and declared their willingness to render us every service. He lamented that it would be so long before they should be supplied with firearms, but that till then they could subsist as they had heretofore done. He concluded by saying that there were not horses here sufficient to transport our goods, but that he would return to the village to-morrow, and bring all his own horses, and encourage his people to come over with theirs. The conference being ended to our satisfaction, we now enquired of Cameahwait what chiefs were among the party, and he pointed out two of them. We then distributed our presents; to Cameahwait we gave a medal of the small size, with the likeness of President Jefferson, and on the reverse a figure of hands clasped with a pipe and tomahawk; to this was added a uniform coat, a shirt, a pair of scarlet leggings, a carrot of tobacco, and some small articles. Each of the other chiefs received a small medal struck during the presidency of General Washington, a shirt, handkerchief, leggings, a knife, and some tobacco. Medals of the same sort were also presented to two young warriors, who though not chiefs were promising youths and very much respected in the tribe. These honorary gifts were followed by presents of paint, moccasins, awls, knives, beads and looking-glasses. We also gave them all a plentiful meal of Indian corn, of which the hull is taken off by being boiled in lye; and as this was the first they had ever tasted, they

were very much pleased with it. They had indeed abundant sources of surprise in all they saw; the appearance of the men, their arms, their clothing, the canoes, the strange looks of the negro, and the sagacity of our dog, all in turn shared their admiration, which was raised to astonishment by a shot from the air-gun; this operation was instantly considered as *a great medicine,* by which they as well as the other Indians mean something emanating directly from the Great Spirit, or produced by his invisible and incomprehensible agency. The display of all these riches had been intermixed with inquiries into the geographical situation of their country; for we had learnt by experience that to keep the savages in good temper their attention should not be wearied with too much business; but that the serious affairs should be enlivened by a mixture of what is new and entertaining. Our hunters brought in very seasonably four deer and an antelope, the last of which we gave to the Indians, who in a very short time devoured it. After the council was over, we consulted as to our future operations. The game does not promise to last here for a number of days, and this circumstance combined with many others to induce our going on as soon as possible. Our Indian information as to the state of the Columbia is of a very alarming kind, and our first object is of course to ascertain the practicability of descending it, of which the Indians discourage our expectations. It was therefore agreed that Captain Clark should set off in the morning with eleven men, furnished, besides their arms, with tools for making canoes; that

he should take Chaboneau and his wife to the camp of the Shoshones, where he was to leave them, in order to hasten the collection of horses; that he was then to lead his men down to the Columbia, and if he found it navigable, and the timber in sufficient quantity, begin to build canoes. As soon as he had decided as to the propriety of proceeding down the Columbia or across the mountains, he was to send back one of the men with information of it to Captain Lewis, who by that time would have brought up the whole party, and the rest of the baggage as far as the Shoshone village. Preparations were accordingly made this evening for such an arrangement."

CHAPTER VIII

ACROSS THE ROCKIES TO THE TRIBUTARIES OF THE COLUMBIA

HAVING reached, in the Shoshone country, the extreme navigable part of the Missouri, the anxiety of the Expedition commanders now was how best to get across the Rockies and meet some of the tributaries of the Columbia that would conduct the party to that river, thence down its waters to the Western Sea. Chats over the matter with the friendly Shoshones were not reassuring, for the chiefs of the tribe spoke alarmingly of the difficulties to be encountered by the way, and of the certain dearth of food supplies *en route;* while they deemed the season, comparatively early as it yet was, too far advanced to permit of the party getting across the mountains before snow fell and blocked or seriously delayed the passage. There was, it is true, the alternative of a water passage for the party to the Columbia, but that, the Shoshones said, was not only tedious and circuitous, but well nigh impracticable, owing to the wild cañons on the Lemhi and the Salmon Rivers and the turbulent channel of the Snake River, terrors which usually appalled even the hardiest boatmen-adventurers. There was nothing therefore for it but

the trail over the Rockies, if the Expedition would risk the snow-blockades and the scarcity of game and other food supplies on the way. What were the difficulties that lay before the party may be gleaned from the following extracts from the "Journal," which narrate the efforts made by Captain Clark to ascertain the best course the Expedition should pursue in getting across the Great Divide. The tentative exploration was conducted with the aid of a guide, then visiting the Shoshone camp, who professed to be familiar with the region and the difficulties that must beset any party in getting across the Rockies to the Pacific Slope and the available waterways to the Western Sea.

"Captain Clark, in the meantime, made particular inquiries as to the situation of the country, and the possibility of soon reaching a navigable water. The chief began by drawing on the ground a delineation of the rivers, from which it appeared that his information was very limited. The river on which the camp is he divided into two branches just above us, which, as he indicated by the opening of the mountains, were in view; he next made it discharge itself into a larger river ten miles below, coming from the southwest; the joint stream continued one day's march to the northwest, and then inclined to the westward for two days' march farther. At that place he placed several heaps of sand on each side, which, as he explained them, represented vast mountains of rock always covered with snow, in passing through which the river was so completely hemmed in by the high rocks that there was no possibility of

travelling along the shore; that the bed of the river was obstructed by sharp-pointed rocks, and such its rapidity, that as far as the eye could reach it presented a perfect column of foam. The mountains, he said, were equally inaccessible, as neither man nor horse could cross them; that such being the state of the country neither he nor any of his nation had ever attempted to go beyond the mountains. Cameahwait said also that he had been informed by the Chopunnish, or Pierced-nose Indians, who reside on this river west of the mountains, that it ran a great way towards the setting sun, and at length lost itself in a great lake of water which was ill-tasted, and where the white men lived.

"An Indian belonging to a band of Shoshones who live to the southwest, and who happened to be at camp, was then brought in, and inquiries made of him as to the situation of the country in that direction; this he described in terms scarcely less terrible than those in which Cameahwait had represented the west. He said that his relations lived at the distance of twenty days' march from this place, on a course a little to the west of south and not far from the whites, with whom they traded for horses, mules, cloth, metal, beads, and the shells here worn as ornaments, and which are those of a species of pearl oyster. In order to reach his country we should be obliged during the first seven days to climb over steep rocky mountains where there was no game, and we should find nothing but roots for subsistence. Even for these, however, we should be obliged to contend with a fierce warlike people, whom he called the

Broken-moccasins, or moccasins with holes, who lived like bears in holes, and fed on roots and the flesh of such horses as they could steal or plunder from those who passed through the mountains. So rough indeed was the passage that the feet of the horses would be wounded in such a manner that many of them would be unable to proceed. The next part of the route was for ten days through a dry parched desert of sand, inhabited by no animal which would supply us with subsistence, and as the sun had now scorched up the grass and dried up the small pools of water which are sometimes scattered through this desert in the Spring, both ourselves and our horses would perish for want of food and water. About the middle of this plain a large river passes from southeast to northwest, which, though navigable, afforded neither timber nor salmon. Three or four days' march beyond this plain his relations lived, in a country tolerably fertile and partially covered with timber, on another large river running in the same direction as the former; that this last discharges itself into a third large river, on which resided many numerous nations, with whom his own were at war, but whether this last emptied itself into the great or stinking lake, as they called the ocean, he did not know; that from his country to the stinking lake was a great distance, and that the route to it, taken by such of his relations as had visited it, was up the river on which they lived, and over to that on which the white people lived, and which they knew discharged itself into the ocean. This route he advised us to take, but added, that we had better

defer the journey till Spring, when he would himself conduct us.

"This account persuaded us that the streams of which he spoke were southern branches of the Columbia, heading with the Rio des Apostolos, and Rio Colorado, and that the route which he mentioned was to the Gulf of California; Captain Clark therefore told him that this road was too much towards the south for our purpose, and then requested to know if there was no route on the left of the river where we now are, by which we might intercept it below the mountains; but he knew of none except that through the barren plains, which he said joined the mountains on that side, and through which it was impossible to pass at this season, even if we were fortunate enough to escape the Broken-moccasin Indians. Captain Clark recompensed the Indian by a present of a knife, with which he seemed much gratified, and now inquired of Cameahwait by what route the Pierced-nose Indians, who he said lived west of the mountains, crossed over to the Missouri; this he said was towards the north, but that the road was a very bad one; that during the passage he had been told they suffered excessively from hunger, being obliged to subsist for many days on berries alone, there being no game in that part of the mountains, which were broken and rocky, and so thickly covered with timber that they could scarcely pass. Surrounded by difficulties as all the other routes are, this seems to be the most practicable of all the passages by land, since, if the Indians can pass the mountains with their women and children, no difficulties which

they could encounter could be formidable to us; and if the Indians below the mountains are so numerous as they are represented to be, they must have some means of subsistence equally within our power. They tell us indeed that the nations to the westward subsist principally on fish and roots, and that their only game were a few elk, deer, and antelope, there being no buffalo west of the mountain.

"The first inquiry, however, was to ascertain the truth of their information relative to the difficulty of descending the river; for this purpose Captain Clark set out at three o'clock in the afternoon, accompanied by the guide and all his men, except one, whom he left with orders to purchase a horse and join him as soon as possible. At the distance of four miles he crossed the river, and eight miles from the camp halted for the night at a small stream. The road which he followed was a beaten path through a wide rich meadow, in which were several old lodges. On the route he met a number of men, women, and children, as well as horses, and one of the men who appeared to possess some consideration turned back with him, and observing a woman with three salmon obtained them from her, and presented them to the party. Captain Clark shot a mountain cock or cock of the plains, a dark brown bird larger than the dunghill fowl, with a long and pointed tail, and a fleshy protuberance about the base of the upper chop, something like that of the turkey, though without the snout. In the morning,

"August 21, he resumed his march early, and at the distance of five miles reached an Indian lodge of

brush, inhabited by seven families of Shoshones. They behaved with great civility, gave the whole party as much boiled salmon as they could eat, and added as a present several dried salmon and a considerable quantity of choke-berries. After smoking with them all, he visited the fish weir, which was about two hundred yards distant; the river was here divided by three small islands, which occasioned the water to pass along four channels. Of these three were narrow, and stopped by means of trees which were stretched across, and supported by willow stakes, sufficiently near each other to prevent the passage of the fish. About the centre of each was placed a basket formed of willows, eighteen or twenty feet in length, of a cylindrical form, and terminating in a conical shape at its lower extremity; this was situated with its mouth upwards, opposite to an aperture in the weir. The main channel of the water was then conducted to this weir, and as the fish entered it they were so entangled with each other that they could not move, and were taken out by untying the small end of the willow basket. The weir in the main channel was formed in a manner somewhat different; there were in fact two distinct weirs formed of poles and willow sticks quite across the river, approaching each other obliquely with an aperture in each side near the angle. This is made by tying a number of poles together at the top, in parcels of three, which were then set up in a triangular form at the base, two of the poles being in the range desired for the weir, and the third down the stream. To these poles two ranges of other poles

are next lashed horizontally, with willow bark and wythes, and willow sticks joined in with these crosswise, so as to form a kind of wicker-work from the bottom of the river to the height of three or four feet above the surface of the water. This is so thick as to prevent the fish from passing, and even in some parts with the help of a little gravel and some stone enables them to give any direction which they wish to the water. These two weirs being placed near to each other, one for the purpose of catching the fish as they ascend, the other as they go down the river, are provided with two baskets made in the form already described, and which are placed at the apertures of the weir.

"After examining these curious objects, he returned to the lodges, and soon passed the river to the left, where an Indian brought him a tomahawk which he said he had found in the grass, near the lodge where Captain Lewis had stayed on his first visit to the village. This was a tomahawk which had been missed at the time, and supposed to be stolen; it was, however, the only article which had been lost in our intercourse with the nation, and as even that was returned the inference is highly honorable to the integrity of the Shoshones. On leaving the lodges, Captain Clark crossed to the left side of the river, and despatched five men to the forks of it, in search of the man left behind yesterday, who procured a horse and passed by another road, as they learnt, to the forks. At the distance of fourteen miles they killed a large salmon, two and a half feet long, in a creek six miles below the forks; and after

travelling about twenty miles through the valley, following the course of the river, which runs nearly northwest, halted in a small meadow on the right side, under a cliff of rocks. Here they were joined by the five men who had gone in quest of Crusatte. They had been to the forks of the river, where the natives resort in great numbers for the purpose of gigging fish, of which they made our men a present of five fresh salmon. In addition to this food, one deer was killed to-day.

"The western branch of this river is much larger than the eastern, and after we passed the junction we found the river about one hundred yards in width, rapid and shoaly, but containing only a small quantity of timber. As Captain Lewis was the first white man who visited its waters, Captain Clark gave it the name of Lewis's River. The low grounds through which he had passed to-day were rich and wide, but at his camp this evening the hills begin to assume a formidable aspect. The cliff under which he lay is of a reddish-brown color, the rocks which have fallen from it are a dark brown flintstone. Near the place are gulleys of white sandstone, and quantities of a fine sand, of a snowy whiteness; the mountains on each side are high and rugged, with some pine trees scattered over them.

"August 22.—He soon began to perceive that the Indian accounts had not exaggerated; at the distance of a mile he passed a small creek, and the points of four mountains, which were rocky, and so high that it seemed almost impossible to cross them with horses. The road lay over the sharp fragments of

rocks which had fallen from the mountains, and were strewed in heaps for miles together, yet the horses, altogether unshod, travelled across them as fast as the men, and without detaining them a moment. They passed two bold-running streams, and reached the entrance of a small river, where a few Indian families resided. They had not been previously acquainted with the arrival of the whites, the guide was behind, and the wood so thick that we came upon them unobserved, till at a very short distance. As soon as they saw us, the women and children fled in great consternation; the men offered us everything they had, the fish on the scaffolds, the dried berries, and the collars of elk's tushes worn by the children. We took only a small quantity of the food, and gave them in return some small articles which conduced very much to pacify them.

"The guide, now coming up, explained to them who we were, and the object of our visit, which seemed to relieve the fears, but still a number of the women and children did not recover from their fright, but cried during our stay, which lasted about an hour. The guide, whom we found a very intelligent friendly old man, informed us that up this river there was a road which led over the mountains to the Missouri. On resuming his route, he went along the steep side of a mountain about three miles, and then reached the river near a small island, at the lower part of which he encamped; he here attempted to gig some fish, but could only obtain one small salmon. The river is here shoal and rapid, with many rocks scattered in various directions through its bed.

On the sides of the mountains are some scattered pines, and of those on the left the tops are covered with them; there are however but few in the low grounds through which they passed, indeed they have seen only a single tree fit to make a canoe, and even that was small. The country has an abundant growth of berries, and we met several women and children gathering them who bestowed them upon us with great liberality. Among the woods Captain Clark observed a species of woodpecker, the beak and tail of which were white, the wings black, and every other part of the body of a dark brown; its size was that of the robin, and it fed on the seeds of the pine.

"August 23.—Captain Clark set off very early, but as his route lay along the steep side of a mountain, over irregular and broken masses of rocks, which wounded the horses' feet, he was obliged to proceed slowly. At the distance of four miles he reached the river, but the rocks here became so steep, and projected so far into the river, that there was no mode of passing, except through the water. This he did for some distance, though the river was very rapid, and so deep that they were forced to swim their horses. After following the edge of the water for about a mile under this steep cliff, he reached a small meadow, below which the whole current of the river beat against the right shore on which he was, and which was formed of a solid rock perfectly inaccessible to horses. Here too, the little track which he had been pursuing terminated. He therefore resolved to leave the horses and the greater part of the men at this place, and examine the river still further,

in order to determine if there were any possibility of descending it in canoes. Having killed nothing except a single goose to-day, and the whole of our provision being consumed last evening, it was by no means advisable to remain any length of time where they were. He now directed the men to fish and hunt at this place till his return, and then with his guide and three men he proceeded, clambering over immense rocks, and along the sides of lofty precipices which bordered the river, when at about twelve miles distance he reached a small meadow, the first he had seen on the river since he left his party. A little below this meadow, a large creek twelve yards wide, and of some depth, discharges itself from the north. Here were some recent signs of an Indian encampment, and the tracks of a number of horses, who must have come along a plain Indian path, which he now saw following the course of the creek. This stream his guide said led towards a large river running to the north, and was frequented by another nation for the purpose of catching fish. He remained here two hours, and having taken some small fish, made a dinner on them with the addition of a few berries.

"From the place where he had left the party, to the mouth of this creek, it presents one continued rapid, in which are five shoals, neither of which could be passed with loaded canoes; and the baggage must therefore be transported for a considerable distance over the steep mountains, where it would be impossible to employ horses for the relief of the men. Even the empty canoes must be let down the rapids

by means of cords, and not even in that way without great risk both to the canoes as well as to the men. At one of these shoals, indeed, the rocks rise so perpendicularly from the water as to leave no hope of a passage or even a portage without great labor in removing rocks, and in some instances cutting away the earth. To surmount these difficulties would exhaust the strength of the party, and what is equally discouraging would waste our time and consume our provisions, of neither of which have we much to spare. The season is now far advanced, and the Indians tell us we shall shortly have snow; the salmon too have so far declined that the natives themselves are hastening from the country, and not an animal of any kind larger than a pheasant or a squirrel, and of even these a few only will then be seen in this part of the mountains; after which we shall be obliged to rely on our own stock of provisions, which will not support us more than ten days.

"These circumstances combine to render a passage by water impracticable in our present situation. To descend the course of the river on horseback is the other alternative, and scarcely a more inviting one. The river is so deep that there are only a few places where it can be forded, and the rocks approach so near the water as to render it impossible to make a route along the water's edge. In crossing the mountains themselves we should have to encounter, besides their steepness, one barren surface of broken masses of rock, down which in certain seasons the torrents sweep vast quantities of stone into the river. These rocks are of a whitish brown, and towards the

base of a gray color, and so hard, that on striking them with steel they yield a fire like flint. This sombre appearance is in some places scarcely relieved by a single tree, though near the river and on the creeks there is more timber, among which are some tall pine; several of these might be made into canoes, and, by lashing two of them together, one of tolerable size might be formed.

"After dinner he continued his route, and at the distance of half a mile passed another creek about five yards wide. Here his guide informed him that by ascending the creek for some distance he would have a better road, and cut off a considerable bend of the river towards the south. He therefore pursued a well-beaten Indian track up this creek for about six miles, when leaving the creek to the right he passed over a ridge, and after walking a mile again met the river, where it flows through a meadow of about eighty acres in extent. This they passed and then ascended a high and steep point of a mountain, from which the guide now pointed out where the river broke through the mountains about twenty miles distant. Near the base of the mountains a small river falls in from the south; this view was terminated by one of the loftiest mountains Captain Clark had ever seen, which was perfectly covered with snow. Towards this formidable barrier the river went directly on, and there it was, as the guide observed, that the difficulties and dangers of which he and Cameahwait had spoken commenced. After reaching the mountain, he said, the river continues its course towards the north for many miles,

between high perpendicular rocks, which were scattered through its bed; it then penetrated the mountain through a narrow gap, on each side of which arose perpendicularly a rock as high as the top of the mountain before them; that the river then made a bend which concealed its future course from view, and as it was alike impossible to descend the river or clamber over that vast mountain, eternally covered with snow, neither he nor any of his nation had ever been lower than at a place where they could see the gap made by the river on entering the mountain. To that place he said he would conduct Captain Clark if he desired it by the next evening. But he was in need of no further evidence to convince him of the utter impracticability of the route before him. He had already witnessed the difficulties of part of the road, yet after all these dangers his guide, whose intelligence and fidelity he could not doubt, now assured him that the difficulties were only commencing, and what he saw before him too clearly convinced him of the Indian's veracity. He therefore determined to abandon this route, and returned to the upper part of the last creek we had passed, and reaching it an hour after dark encamped for the night; on this creek he had seen in the morning an Indian road coming in from the north.

" Disappointed in finding a route by water, Captain Clark now questioned his guide more particularly as to the direction of this road which he seemed to understand perfectly. He drew a map on the sand, and represented this road as well as that we passed yesterday on Berry creek as both leading to-

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wards two forks of the same great river, where resided a nation called Tushepaws, who, having no salmon on their river, came by these roads to the fish weirs on Lewis's river. He had himself been among these Tushepaws, and having once accompanied them on a fishing party to another river he had there seen Indians who had come across the Rocky Mountains. After a great deal of conversation, or rather signs, and a second and more particular map from his guide, Captain Clark felt persuaded that his guide knew of a road from the Shoshone village they had left, to the great river to the north, without coming so low down as this on a route impracticable for horses." (This was the route the Expedition afterwards took.)

After making the reconnaissance related in the above extracts from the "Journal," Captain Clark reported all we had seen and experienced to Captain Lewis, who had a further talk with Chief Cameahwait, the result of which was the determination to leave the Shoshone camp and venture onward with the party across the mountains. To make the route more acceptable, the tribe were, happily, willing to barter such horses and ponies as they had to spare, with such pack-saddles as they and the Expedition's force could get ready for use. With these arrangements completed, the party, early in September, set forth, led by a guide supplied by the tribe; but before the month was half out they were reduced to the necessity of making a meal for the camp of one of the Indian ponies, the supply of animal food having become exhausted. The toil of the journey through

the mountains, with the straits the Expedition were in in quest of food, are indicated in the subjoined passage from the "Journal":

"The thickets of trees and brush through which we were obliged to cut our way required great labor; the road itself was over the steep and rocky sides of the hills where the horses could not move without danger of slipping down, while their feet were bruised by the rocks and stumps of trees. Accustomed as these animals were to this kind of life they suffered severely, several of them fell to some distance down the sides of the hills, some turned over with the baggage, one was crippled, and two gave out exhausted with fatigue. After crossing the creek several times we at last made five miles, with great fatigue and labor, and encamped on the left side of a creek in a small stony low ground. It was not, however, till after dark that the whole party was collected, and then, as it rained, and we killed nothing, we passed an uncomfortable night. The party had been too busily occupied with the horses to make any hunting excursion, and though as we came along Fish creek we saw many beaver dams we saw none of the animals themselves. In the morning the horses were very stiff and weary. We sent back two men for the load of the horse which had been crippled yesterday, and which we had been forced to leave two miles behind. On their return we set out at eight o'clock, and proceeded up the creek, making a passage through the brush and timber along its borders. The country is generally supplied with pine, and in the low grounds is a great abundance of

fir trees and under-bushes. The mountains are high and rugged, and those to the east of us, covered with snow. With all our precautions the horses were very much injured in passing over the ridges and steep points of the hills, and to add to the difficulty, at the distance of eleven miles, the high mountains closed the creek, so that we were obliged to leave the creek to the right, and cross the mountain abruptly. The ascent was here so steep that several of the horses slipped and hurt themselves, but at last we succeeded in crossing the mountain, and encamped on a small branch of Fish creek. We had now made fourteen miles in a direction nearly north from the river; but this distance, though short, was very fatiguing, and rendered still more disagreeable by the rain which began at three o'clock. At dusk it commenced snowing, and continued till the ground was covered to the depth of two inches, when it changed into a sleet. We here met with a serious misfortune, the last of our thermometers being broken by accident. After making a scanty supper on a little corn and a few pheasants killed in the course of the day, we laid down to sleep, and next morning found everything frozen, and the ground covered with snow. We were obliged to wait some time in order to thaw the covers of the baggage, after which we began our journey at eight o'clock. We crossed a high mountain which forms the dividing ridge between the waters of the creek we had been ascending, and those running to the north and west. We had not gone more than six miles over the snow, when we reached the head of a stream from the right, which directed

its course more to the westward. We descended the steep sides of the hills along its border, and at the distance of three miles found a small branch coming in from the eastward. We saw several of the argalia, but they were too shy to be killed, and we therefore made a dinner from a deer, shot by one of the hunters."

Here is another extract from the "Journal," recording, under date September 16th, the continued straits of the Expedition in its march over the Rockies:

"All around us are high rugged mountains, among which is a lofty range from southeast to northwest, whose tops are without timber, and in some places covered with snow. The night was cloudy and very cold, and three hours before daybreak,

"September 17, it began to snow, and continued all day, so that by evening it was six or eight inches deep. This covered the track so completely that we were obliged constantly to halt and examine, lest we should lose the route. In many places we had nothing to guide us except the branches of the trees which, being low, have been rubbed by the burdens of the Indian horses. The road was, like that of yesterday, along steep hill sides, obstructed with fallen timber, and a growth of eight different species of pine, so thickly strewed that the snow falls from them as we pass, and keeps us continually wet to the skin, and so cold, that we are anxious lest our feet should be frozen, as we have only thin moccasins to defend them.

"At noon we halted to let the horses feed on some long grass on the south side of the mountains, and endeavored by making fires to keep ourselves warm. As soon as the horses were refreshed, Captain Clark went ahead with one man, and at the distance of six miles reached a stream from the right, and prepared fires by the time of our arrival at dusk. We here encamped in a piece of low ground, thickly timbered, but scarcely large enough to permit us to lie level. We had now made thirteen miles. We were all very wet, cold, and hungry; but although, before setting out this morning, we had seen four deer, yet we could not procure any of them, and were obliged to kill a second colt for our supper.

"Our horses became so much scattered during the night that we were detained till one o'clock before they were all collected. We then continued our route over high rough knobs, and several drains and springs, and along a ridge of country separating the waters of two small rivers. The road was still difficult, and several of the horses fell and injured themselves very much, so that we were unable to advance more than ten miles to a small stream, on which we encamped.

"We had killed a few pheasant, but these being insufficient for our subsistence, we killed another of the colts. This want of provisions, and the extreme fatigue to which we were subjected, and the dreary prospects before us, began to dispirit the men. It was therefore agreed that Captain Clark should go on ahead with six hunters, and endeavor to kill something for the support of the party. He therefore set out,

"September 18, early in the morning, in hopes of finding a level country from which he might send back some game. His route lay S. eighty-five degrees W. along the same high dividing ridge, and the road was still very bad; but he moved on rapidly, and at the distance of twenty miles was rejoiced on discovering far off an extensive plain towards the west and southwest, bounded by a high mountain. He halted an hour to let the horses eat a little grass on the hill sides, and then went on twelve and a half miles till he reached a bold creek, running to the left, on which he encamped. To this stream he gave the very appropriate name of Hungry creek; for, having procured no game, they had nothing to eat.

"In the meantime we were detained till after eight o'clock by the loss of one of our horses which had strayed away and could not be found. We then proceeded, but having soon finished the remainder of the colt killed yesterday, felt the want of provisions, which was more sensible from our meeting with no water, till towards nightfall we found some in a ravine among the hills. By pushing on our horses almost to their utmost strength, we made eighteen miles.

"We then melted some snow, and supped on a little portable soup, a few canisters of which, with about twenty weight of bear's oil, are our only remaining means of subsistence. Our guns are scarcely of any service, for there is no living creature in these mountains, except a few small pheasants, a small species of gray squirrel, and a blue bird of the vulture kind about the size of a turtle dove or jay, and even these are difficult to shoot."

At this crisis in the annals of the Expedition, the party were now almost over the Great Divide and descending the Pacific-side slopes of the Rockies. Ere long, they came upon the country of the Nez Percés, or Pierced-nose Indians, situate in what is now the western part of the State of Idaho, close to the upper branches of the Kooskooskee or Clearwater River. The tribe called themselves the Chopunnish, and their chief was known as Twisted-Hair. With the latter, after the surprise at the meeting of the whites was passed, the party leaders had a friendly conference, and through the aid of the interpreter they learned something of the geography of the country the Expedition had yet to pass through to reach the Columbia and its outlet into the Pacific. With this tribe, the Nez Percés, the party stopped for a while to trade, and especially to provide themselves with some few salmon and several prairie wolves or dogs, which, though the Indians kept only as beasts of burden, the men of the Expedition were, in their extremity, attracted to for food. Having been reduced on the way across the Divide to meals of fish, berries, and roots, the "Journal" states that the experiment was made "to vary the food of the party by purchasing a few dogs, and after having been accustomed to horse-flesh, felt no disrelish to this dish. The Chopunnish," the same authority adds, "have great numbers of dogs which they employ for domestic purposes, but never eat, and our using the flesh of that animal soon brought us into ridicule as 'dog-eaters.'" Of the tribe among whom they were temporarily sojourning, the "Journal" states:

"The Chopunnish or Pierced-nose nation, who reside on the Kooskooskee and Lewis' Rivers, are in person stout, portly, well-looking men; the women are small, with good features, and generally handsome, though the complexion of both sexes is darker than that of the Tushepaws. In dress they resemble that nation, being fond of displaying their ornaments. The buffalo or elk-skin robe decorated with beads, sea-shells, chiefly mother-of-pearl, attached to an otter-skin collar and hung in the hair, which falls in front in two queues; feathers, paints of different kinds, principally white, green, and light blue, all of which they find in their own country; these are the chief ornaments they use. In the winter they wear a short shirt of dressed skins, long painted leggings and moccasins, and a plait of twisted grass round the neck.

"The dress of the women is more simple, consisting of a long shirt of argalia or ibex skin, reaching down to the ankles without a girdle; to this are tied little pieces of brass and shells and other small articles; but the head is not at all ornamented. The dress of the female is indeed more modest, and more studiously so than any we have observed, though the other sex is careless of the indelicacy of exposure.

"The Chopunnish have very few amusements, for their life is painful and laborious; and all their exertions are necessary to earn even their precarious subsistence. During the summer and autumn they are busily occupied in fishing for salmon, and collecting their winter store of roots. In the winter they hunt the deer on snow-shoes over the plains, and towards

Spring cross the mountains to the Missouri for the purpose of trafficking for buffalo robes."

In camp in the vicinity of the Chopunnish lodges, the Expedition made ready their canoes for the descent of the Kooskooskee, and prepared one or two dug-outs in which to transport the heavier stores of the party over the rough water they expected to find as they proceeded seaward. Here also they left what remained uneaten of their Indian ponies in charge of a chief, against the wants of the return journey, and *cached,* or concealed in underbrush, their saddlery and other impedimenta they were not likely to require on the river. When all was ready, the Expedition committed itself, on October 8th, to the further unknown route to the sea, by the Clearwater and the Snake Rivers, toward the Columbia, which great waterway the explorers safely reached and entered on October 16th. Here, from the Sokulk Indians, whom they met with at the entrance into the Columbia, the party *chefs* purchased two-score more dogs for edible purposes, together with some prairie cocks, and about twenty pounds of dried horseflesh.

CHAPTER IX

AFLOAT ON THE COLUMBIA TO TIDEWATER AND THE OCEAN

THE Expedition now set out on the final stage of its long journey on the waters of the Columbia or Oregon River. This great river, as all know, has its sources in what is now the Canadian Province of British Columbia, whence it courses southwestward through the present State of Washington, and, when it passes the confluence of the Snake or Lewis River, flows westward, with a northern trend, between the States of Oregon and Washington to the Pacific. Its navigation, the explorers were to find, was much obstructed by cascades and rapids, though many parts of it they also found sublime in its scenery. As yet, practically nothing of the noble river was known: only in 1792 had it been discovered, when in that year Captain Gray of Boston, in his ship the *Columbia,* entered and named the mighty stream while in that section of the Pacific coast in search for furs. This chance act in the mouth of the river, with the subsequent descent of its waters by the Lewis and Clark Expedition, established the United States claim to the region, and to what was called the Oregon country. This, however, was not settled until the year 1846, when in a dispute with Great Britain,

at the time of the War with Mexico, the United States were ceded by treaty all the country south of latitude 49°. Here, in 1810, it will be recalled, John Jacob Astor founded, fifteen miles from the mouth of the Columbia, his great fur-trade emporium, Astoria, the headquarters of the salmon fishery and peltry trade of the Northwest.

The explorers, meanwhile, as we have stated, had entered the Columbia proper (October 17, 1805), and in the vicinity they gained from an Indian chief (of the Yellippit tribe) some knowledge of the course and characteristics of the river. On the way down, the party came upon Indians who fled in alarm from the whites, but whose confidence was gained by kindly acts and the distribution of trinkets and other presents to their squaws. Soon now, from a high bluff near the banks of the stream, Captain Clark sighted a lofty mountain, with snow-covered tops, which was afterward ascertained to be Mount St. Helena, in the present State of Washington, and already noted from the Pacific by Vancouver, the British navigator who had served under Captain Cook, and who, about five years before the close of the previous century, had explored the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the Gulf of Georgia, and the shores of Vancouver Island. On their descent of the Columbia, the Expedition had made its camp on an island in the river, of which, and the events connected with it, we have an interesting account in the "Journal." Here is the narrative:

"Four miles beyond this island we came to a rapid, from the appearance of which it was judged

prudent to examine it. After landing for that purpose on the left side, we began to enter the channel which is close under the opposite shore. It is a very dangerous rapid, strewed with high rocks and rocky islands, and in many places obstructed by shoals, over which the canoes were to be hauled, so that we were more than two hours in passing through the rapids, which extend for the same number of miles. The rapid has several small islands, and banks of musselshells are spread along the river in several places. In order to lighten the boats, Captain Clark, with the two chiefs, the interpreter, and his wife, had walked across the low grounds on the left to the foot of the rapids. On the way, Captain Clark ascended a cliff about two hundred feet above the water, from which he saw that the country on both sides of the river immediately from its cliffs was low, and spreads itself into a level plain, extending for a great distance on all sides. To the west, at the distance of about one hundred and fifty miles, is a very high mountain covered with snow, and from its direction and appearance, he supposed to be the Mount St. Helen's, laid down by Vancouver, as visible from the mouth of the Columbia: there is also another mountain of a conical form, whose top is covered with snow, in a southwest direction. As Captain Clark arrived at the lower end of the rapid before any, except one of the small canoes, he sat down on a rock to wait for them, and, seeing a crane fly across the river, shot it, and it fell near him. Several Indians had been before this passing on the opposite side towards the rapids, and some few who had been

nearly in front of him, being either alarmed at his appearance or the report of the gun, fled to their houses. Captain Clark was afraid that these people had not yet heard that white men were coming, and therefore, in order to allay their uneasiness before the whole party should arrive, he got into the small canoe with three men and rowed over towards the houses, and while crossing, shot a duck, which fell into the water.

"As he approached, no person was to be seen except three men in the plains, and they too fled as he came near the shore. He landed before five houses close to each other, but no one appeared, and the doors, which were of mat, were closed. He went towards one of them with a pipe in his hand, and pushing aside the mat entered the lodge, where he found thirty-two persons, chiefly men and women, with a few children, all in the greatest consternation; some hanging down their heads, others crying and wringing their hands. He went up to them all and shook hands with them in the most friendly manner; but their apprehensions, which had for a moment subsided, revived on his taking out a burning-glass, as there was no roof to the house, and lighting his pipe: he then offered it to several of the men, and distributed among the women and children some small trinkets which he carried about with him, and gradually restored some tranquillity among them. He then left this house, and directing each of the men to go into a house, went himself to a second: here he found the inhabitants more terrified than those he had first seen; but he succeeded in

pacifying them, and then visited the other houses, where the men had been equally successful.

"After leaving the houses he went out to sit on a rock, and beckoned to some of the men to come and smoke with him; but none of them ventured to join him till the canoes arrived with the two chiefs, who immediately explained our pacific intentions towards them. Soon after the interpreter's wife landed, and her presence dissipated all doubts of our being well-disposed, since, in this country, no woman ever accompanies a war party: they therefore all came out and seemed perfectly reconciled; nor could we indeed blame them for their terrors, which were perfectly natural. They told the two chiefs that they knew we were not men, for they had seen us fall from the clouds; in fact, unperceived by them, Captain Clark had shot the white crane, which they had seen fall just before he appeared to their eyes: the duck which he had killed also fell close by him, and as there were a few clouds flying over at the moment, they connected the fall of the birds and his sudden appearance, and believed that he had himself dropped from the clouds; the noise of the rifle, which they had never heard before, being considered merely as the sound to announce so extraordinary an event. This belief was strengthened, when on entering the room he brought down fire from the heavens by means of his burning-glass: we soon convinced them satisfactorily that we were only mortals, and after one of our chiefs had explained our history and objects, we all smoked together in great harmony. These people do not speak precisely

the same language as the Indians above, but understand them in conversation. In a short time we were joined by many of the inhabitants from below, several of them on horseback, and all pleased to see us, and to exchange their fish and berries for a few trinkets. We remained here to dine, and then proceeded. At half a mile the hilly country on the right side of the river ceased: at eleven miles we found a small rapid, and a mile further came to a small island on the left, where there are some willows. Since we had left the five lodges, we passed twenty more dispersed along the river at different parts of the valley on the right; but as they were now apprised of our coming they showed no signs of alarm.

"On leaving the island we passed three miles further along a country which is low on both sides of the river, and encamped under some willow trees on the left, having made thirty-six miles to-day. Immediately opposite to us is an island close to the left shore, and another in the middle of the river, on which are twenty-four houses of Indians, all engaged in drying fish. We had scarcely landed before about a hundred of them came over in their boats to visit us, bringing with them a present of some wood, which was very acceptable: we received them in as kind a manner as we could—smoked with all of them, and gave the principal chief a string of wampum; but the highest satisfaction they enjoyed was the music of two of our violins, with which they seemed much delighted: they remained all night at our fires. This tribe is a branch of the nation called Pishquitpaws, and can raise about three hundred

and fifty men. In dress they resemble the Indians near the forks of the Columbia, except that their robes are smaller and do not reach lower than the waist; indeed, three-fourths of them have scarcely any robes at all. The dress of the females is equally scanty; for they wear only a small piece of a robe which covers their shoulders and neck, and reaches down the back to the waist, where it is attached by a piece of leather tied tight round the body: their breasts, which are thus exposed to view, are large, ill-shaped, and are suffered to hang down very low: their cheek-bones high, their heads flattened, and their persons in general adorned with scarcely any ornaments. Both sexes are employed in curing fish, of which they have great quantities on their scaffolds."

Appended are some further records of the incidents in passing down the Columbia, the chief difficulty in accomplishing which was the danger to the canoes and their occupants from the many rapids and falls met with in the passage. The extract appears in the "Journal" under date October 23rd.

"Having ascertained from the Indians, and by actual examination, the best mode of bringing down the canoes, it was found necessary, as the river was divided into several narrow channels, by rocks and islands, to follow the route adopted by the Indians themselves. This operation Captain Clark began this morning, and after crossing to the other side of the river, hauled the canoes over a point of land, so as to avoid a perpendicular fall of twenty feet. At the distance of four hundred and fifty-seven yards

we reached the water, and embarked at a place where a long rocky island compresses the channel of the river within the space of a hundred and fifty yards, so as to form nearly a semicircle. On leaving this rocky island the channel is somewhat wider, but a second and much larger island of hard black rock, still divides it from the main stream, while on the left shore it is closely bordered by perpendicular rocks. Having descended in this way for a mile, we reached a pitch of the river, which being divided by two large rocks, descends with great rapidity down a fall eight feet in height: as the boats could not be navigated down this steep descent, we were obliged to land and let them down as slowly as possible by strong ropes of elk skin, which we had prepared for the purpose. They all passed in safety except one, which being loosed by the breaking of the ropes, was driven down, but was recovered by the Indians below. With this rapid ends the first pitch of the great falls, which is not great in point of height, and remarkable only for the singular manner in which the rocks have divided its channel. From the marks everywhere perceivable at the falls, it is obvious that in high floods, which must be in the Spring, the water below the falls rises nearly to a level with that above them. Of this rise, which is occasioned by some obstructions which we do not as yet know, the salmon must avail themselves to pass up the river in such multitudes that that fish is almost the only one caught in great abundance above the falls; but below that place, we observe the salmon trout, and the heads of a species of trout smaller than the salmon

trout, which is in great quantities, and which they are now burying to be used as their winter food. A hole of any size being dug, the sides and bottom are lined with straw, over which skins are laid: on these the fish, after being well dried, is laid, covered with other skins, and the hole closed with a layer of earth twelve or fifteen inches deep. About three o'clock we reached the lower camp, but our joy at having accomplished this object was somewhat diminished by the persecution of a new acquaintance. On reaching the upper point of the portage, we found that the Indians had been encamped there not long since, and had left behind them multitudes of fleas. These sagacious animals were so pleased to exchange the straw and fish skins, in which they had been living, for some better residence, that we were soon covered with them, and during the portage the men were obliged to strip to the skin, in order to brush them from their bodies. They were not, however, so easily dislodged from our clothes, and accompanied us in great numbers to our camp.

"We saw no game except a sea-otter, which was shot in the narrow channel as we came down, but we could not get it. Having therefore scarcely any provisions, we purchased eight small fat dogs, a food to which we are now compelled to have recourse, for the Indians are very unwilling to sell us any of their good fish, which they reserve for the market below. Fortunately, however, the habit of using this animal has completely overcome the repugnance which we felt at first, and the dog, if not a favorite dish, is always an acceptable one. The

meridian altitude of to-day gives 45° 42′ 57″ 3-10 north, as the latitude of our camp.

"On the beach near the Indian huts, we observed two canoes of a different shape and size from any which we had hitherto seen: one of these we got in exchange for our smallest canoe, giving a hatchet and a few trinkets to the owner, who said he had purchased it from a white man below the falls, by giving him a horse. These canoes are very beautifully made; they are wide in the middle and tapering towards each end, with curious figures carved on the bow. They are thin, but being strengthened by cross bars, about an inch in diameter, which are tied with strong pieces of bark through holes in the sides, are able to bear very heavy burdens, and seem calculated to live in the roughest water."

The nights now began to get cold, and even the days were cool, while much rain fell. About this time, the Expedition, it is related, was much harassed by attacks of fleas, a persecution which its members owed to contact with the Indians at the Falls of the Columbia. The tribes were, however, hospitable and brought the party presents of berries, nuts, and fish. On the way they now (the beginning of November) reached tidewater on the river, and in consequence met with numbers of sea-otter, but they were found too shy to get near with a musket, and so no catch of them was made, though one was shot and wounded. As they neared the coast, the rain fell for many days in torrents, while there was much fog, which not only impeded progress, but made the journey uncomfortable for all. Here, near

the Dalles of the Columbia, they now came upon the Skilloots (Echeloots), a dwindling tribe of the Chinook Indians, now mainly extinct. From them the Expedition was furnished with supplies of fish and a few white geese, with a basketful of edible roots and some raspberries. One or two of the Echeloot braves they bargained with to help in the conduct of the Expedition down the river, as far as the Clatsop villages on the coast. This became necessary from the stormy character of the lower waters of the Columbia as they neared the sea.

In spite of the perils and discomforts of the voyage, the men of the party continued cheerful, especially in view of the approach to the ocean, where at the mouth of the Columbia it was designed to pass the winter. On November 7th, "after a journey of a year and a half through the unbroken wilderness," as an historian of the Expedition records, "they first saw the blue line in the western horizon that told them that the goal of their wanderings was at hand. It was the Pacific Ocean. At last they had reached the boundless watery plain upon which Balboa had gazed with a swelling soul, and through which Magellan had ploughed with his hardy seamen until he had belted the globe." The "Journal" also expresses satisfaction at the termination of the overland voyage and the delightful prospect of the ocean—"that ocean, the object of all our labors, and the reward of all our anxieties. This cheering view exhilarated the spirits of all the party, who were still more delighted on hearing the roar of the breakers. We went on amid great cheerfulness under the high

mountainous country which continued along the right bank; the shore, however, was so bold and rocky that we could not, until after going fourteen miles from the last village, find any spot fit for an encampment. At that distance, having made during the day thirty-four miles, we spread our mats on the ground, and passed the night in the rain."

In the foul weather in which they reached the Pacific, there was little to cheer the Expedition, beyond that derived from the consciousness of duty well and loyally performed. Nor, when they arrived at the end of their destination, did the party find any town or city to frequent, as now, where they could get comfortable relief and relate the incidents of their long and perilous overland journey. Still less was it possible, at that time, to communicate with Washington, as can now be done by telegraph, so as to apprise the authorities there of the successful completion of one-half of their arduous enterprise. All that could be done, was the search by the party commanders for a suitable camp to winter in, and to commit to the pages of the "Journal" the record of their daily experiences. Of the latter, the "Journal," under dates November 9 and 12, here appended, furnishes further evidence of the incidents and discomforts of the situation:

November 9.—"Fortunately for us, the tide did not rise as high as our camp during the night; but being accompanied by high winds from the south, the canoes, which we could not place beyond its reach, were filled with water, and were saved with much difficulty: our position was very uncomfort-

able, but as it was impossible to move from it, we waited for a change of weather. It rained, however, during the whole day, and at two o'clock in the afternoon the flood tide set in, accompanied by a high wind from the south, which, about four o'clock, shifted to the southwest, and blew almost a gale directly from the sea. The immense waves now broke over the place where we were encamped, and the large trees, some of them five or six feet thick, which had lodged at the point, were drifted over our camp, and the utmost vigilance of every man could scarcely save our canoes from being crushed to pieces. We remained in the water and drenched with rain during the rest of the day; our only food being some dried fish, and some rain-water which we caught. Yet, though wet and cold, and some of them sick from using the salt-water, the men are cheerful, and full of anxiety to see more of the ocean. The rain continued all night, and,

"November 10th, the following morning, the wind however lulled, and the waves not being so high, we loaded our canoes and proceeded. The mountains on the right are high, covered with timber, chiefly pine, and descend in a bold and rocky shore to the water. We went through a deep niche and several inlets on the right, while on the opposite side is a large bay, above which the hills are close on the river. At the distance of ten miles the wind rose from the northwest and the waves became so high that we were forced to return for two miles to a place where we could with safety unload. Here we landed at the mouth of a small run, and having

placed our baggage on a pile of drifted logs waited until low water. The river then appeared more calm: we therefore started, but after going a mile found the waves too high for our canoes and were obliged to put to shore. We unloaded the canoes, and having placed the baggage on a rock above the reach of the tide, encamped on some drift logs which formed the only place where we could lie, the hills rising steep over our heads to the height of five hundred feet. All our baggage as well as ourselves were thoroughly wet with the rain, which did not cease during the day; it continued violently during the night, in the course of which the tide reached the logs on which we lay, and set them afloat.

"November 11.—The wind was still high from the southwest, and drove the waves against the shore with great fury: the rain too fell in torrents, and not only drenched us to the skin, but loosened the stones on the hill-sides, which then came rolling down upon us. In this comfortless situation we remained all day wet, cold, with nothing but dried fish to satisfy our hunger; the canoes in one place at the mercy of the waves; the baggage in another, and all the men scattered on floating logs, or sheltering themselves in the crevices of the rocks and hill-sides. A hunter was despatched in hopes of finding some fresh meat, but the hills were so steep, and covered with undergrowth and fallen timber, that he could not penetrate them, and he was forced to return. About twelve o'clock we were visited by five Indians in a canoe: they came from above this place on the opposite side of the river, and their language much

resembles that of the Wahkiacum: they called themselves *Cathlamahs*. In person they are small, ill-made, and badly clothed; though one of them had on a sailor's round jacket and pantaloons, which, as he explained by signs, he had received from the whites below the point: we purchased from them thirteen red char, a fish which we found very excellent. After some time they went on board the boat, and crossed the river, which is here five miles wide, through a very heavy sea.

"November 12.—About three o'clock a tremendous gale of wind arose, accompanied with lightning, thunder and hail: at six it became light for a short time, but a violent rain soon began and lasted during the day. During this storm one of our boats, secured by being sunk with great quantities of stone, got loose, but drifting against a rock, was recovered without having received much injury. Our situation became now much more dangerous, for the waves were driven with fury against the rocks and trees, which till now had afforded us refuge: we therefore took advantage of a low tide, and moved about half a mile round a point to a small brook, which we had not observed till now on account of the thick bushes and driftwood which concealed its mouth. Here we were more safe; but still cold and wet, our clothes and bedding rotten as well as wet, our baggage at a distance, and the canoes, our only means of escape from this place, at the mercy of the waves: we were, however, fortunate enough to enjoy good health, and even had the luxury of getting some fresh salmon and three salmon trout

in the brook. Three of the men attempted to go round a point in our small Indian canoe, but the high waves rendered her quite unmanageable; these boats requiring the seamanship of the natives themselves to make them live in so rough a sea."

The Expedition, after eighteen months of a toilsome and hazardous journey, now found a welcome winter home, in huts erected in an enclosed and defended camp, which was named Fort Clatsop, from the Indians who inhabited the region. The latter they found friendly and comparatively cleanly—at least, as Captain Clark observes, "they sometimes washed their hands and faces." In the camp many of the members of the Expedition were for a while confined by sickness and the effects of the labors they had gone through. From it the hunters of the party now went forth in search of substantial food, which, however, was difficult to find; while the leaders and the savants explored the country about, sometimes making extensive journeys along the coast (not then recognized as an United States possession). On one of these expeditions, as we find related in the "Journal," Captain Clark purchased a quantity of whale blubber, which the Indians had extracted from a stranded carcass on the coast. That commander thus facetiously alludes to the matter, in that he "thanked Providence for driving the whale to us; and think Him much more kind to us than he was to Jonah, having sent this monster to be swallowed by us, instead of swallowing of us as Jonah's did!"

CHAPTER X

IN CAMP BY THE PACIFIC

Rest, and shelter from the continued rains and other inclemencies incident to life by the coast, brought recovery to the sick contingent of the Expedition, aided by a somewhat more nutritious diet, which could now be provided, as well as temptingly cooked. A sense of relief, moreover, was experienced by the party in not having to fear or fight off molestation by the natives among whom they tarried, for the Chinooks of the region were friendly, and to a remarkable extent uncontaminated by contact with a poor class of whites, while having few vices, save gambling, and no addiction to drink. Of spirituous liquors, indeed, they are, we are told, in the main ignorant. So far, the diet of the party over the winter was mainly fish; but later on elk was met with, and brought to camp by a skilled French Canadian member (Drewyer) of the Expeditionary force. The Indians, possessing but a few muskets, and with only the traditional bow and arrow, could not be much relied on for game; but they were good fishermen, and unusually expert in handling their canoes at the mouth of the river, in even boisterous weather. Of the natives (the Chinooks) the "Journal" furnishes the following manifestly accurate description:

"The men are low in stature, rather ugly, and ill-made; their legs being small and crooked, their feet large, and their heads, like those of the women, flattened in a most disgusting manner. These deformities are in part concealed by robes made of sea-otter, deer, elk, beaver, or fox skins. They also employ in their dress robes of the skin of a cat peculiar to this country, and of another animal of the same size, which is light and durable, and sold at a high price by the Indians, who bring it from above. In addition to these are worn blankets, wrappers of red, blue, or spotted cloth, and some old sailors' clothes, which were very highly prized. The greater part of the men have guns, powder, and ball.

"The women have, in general, handsome faces, but are low and disproportioned, with small feet and large legs and thighs, occasioned, probably, by strands of beads, or various strings, drawn so tight above the ankles, as to prevent the circulation of the blood. Their dress, like that of the Wahkiacums, consists of a short robe, and a tissue of cedar bark. Their hair hangs loosely down the shoulders and back; and their ears, neck, and wrists are ornamented with blue beads. Another decoration, which is very highly prized, consists of figures made by puncturing the arms or legs; and on the arm of one of the squaws we observed the name of J. Bowman, executed in the same way. In language, habits, and in almost every other particular, they resemble the Clatsops, Cathlamahs, and indeed all the people near the mouth of the Columbia. They, however, seem to be inferior to their neighbors in honesty as well as

spirit. No ill-treatment or indignity, on our part, seems to excite any feeling, except fear; nor, although better provided than their neighbors with arms, have they enterprise enough to use them advantageously against the animals of the forest, nor offensively against their neighbors; who owe their safety more to the timidity than the forbearance of the Chinnooks. We had heard instances of pilfering whilst we were amongst them, and therefore had a general order, excluding them from our encampment; so that whenever an Indian wished to visit us, he began by calling out "No Chinnook." It may be probable that this first impression left a prejudice against them, since, when we were among the Clatsops, and other tribes at the mouth of the Columbia, the Indians had less opportunity of stealing, if they were so disposed."

The estimated number of the Chinnooks, according to the account of Lewis and Clark, was four hundred souls, inhabiting about twenty-eight houses. Their mode of disposing of their dead is curious, and may here be quoted from the rich records of the "Journal":

"The Chinnooks, Clatsops, and most of the adjoining nations dispose of the dead in canoes. For this purpose a scaffold is erected, by fixing perpendicularly in the ground four long pieces of splint timber. These are placed two by two just wide enough apart to admit the canoe, and sufficiently long to support its two extremities. The boards are connected by a bar of wood run through them at the height of six feet, on which is placed a small canoe

containing the body of the deceased, carefully wrapped in a robe of dressed skins, with a paddle, and some articles belonging to the deceased, by his side. Over this canoe is placed one of a larger size, reversed, with its gunwale resting on the crossbars, so as to cover the body completely. One or more large mats of rushes or flags are then rolled round the canoes, and the whole secured by cords usually made of the bark of the white cedar. On these crossbars are hung different articles of clothing, or culinary utensils. The method practised by the Killamucks differs somewhat from this; the body being deposited in an oblong box, of plank, which, with the paddle, and other articles, is placed in a canoe, resting on the ground. With the religious opinions of these people we are but little acquainted, since we understand their language too imperfectly to converse on a subject so abstract; but it is obvious, from the different deposits which they place by their dead, that they believe in a future state of existence."

Hardly less interesting is the account given in the "Journal" of the weapons of offence and defence, and those used in the chase, by the tribes of the region. Appended is the record of these:

"The implements used in hunting, by the Clatsops, Chinnooks, and other neighboring nations, are the gun, bow and arrow, deadfall, pits, snares, and spears or gigs. The guns are generally old American or British muskets repaired for this trade; and although there are some good pieces among them, they are constantly out of order, as the Indians have not been sufficiently accustomed to arms to under-

stand the management of them. The powder is kept in small japanned tin flasks, in which the traders sell it; and when the ball or shot fails, they make use of gravel or pieces of metal from their pots, without being sensible of the injury done to their guns. These arms are reserved for hunting elk, and the few deer and bears in this neighborhood; but, as they have no rifles, they are not very successful hunters. The most common weapon is the bow and arrow, with which every man is provided, even though he carries a gun, and which is used in every kind of hunting. The bow is extremely neat, and, being very thin and flat, possesses great elasticity. It is made of the heart of the white cedar, about two feet and a half in length, two inches wide at the centre, whence it tapers to the width of half an inch at the extremities; and the back is covered with the sinews of elk, fastened on by means of a glue made from the sturgeon. The string is formed of the same sinews. The arrow generally consists of two parts; the first is about twenty inches long, and formed of light white pine, with the feather at one end, and at the other a circular hole, which receives the second part, formed of some harder wood, and about five inches long, and secured in its place by means of sinews. The barb is either of stone, or else of iron or copper, in which latter case, the angle is more obtuse than any we have seen.

"If, as sometimes happens, the arrow is formed of a single piece, the whole is of a more durable wood, but the form just described is preferred; because, as much of the game consists of wild fowl on

the ponds, it is desirable that they should be constructed so as to float, if they fall into the water. These arrows are kept in a quiver of elk or young bear skin, opening not at the ends, as the common quivers, but at the sides; which, for those who hunt in canoes, is much more convenient. These weapons are not, however, very powerful, for many of the elk we kill have been wounded with them; and, although the barb with the small end of the arrows remain, yet the flesh closes, and the animal suffers no permanent injury. The deadfalls and snares are used in taking the wolf, the raccoon, and the fox, of which there are, however, but few in this country. The spear or gig employed in pursuit of the sea-otter, (which they call spuck) the common otter, and beaver, consists of two points of barbs, and is like those already described, as common among the Indians on the upper part of the Columbia. The pits are chiefly for the elk, and are therefore usually large and deep cubes of twelve or fourteen feet in depth, and are made by the side of some fallen tree lying across the path frequented by the elk. They are covered with slender boughs and moss, and the elk either sinks into it as he approaches the tree, or in leaping over the tree, falls into the pit on the other side."

The stay of the Expedition at the coast extended from the early days of December (1805) till the beginning of April (1806). Its experiences there, while, in the main, uneventful, were far from pleasant, owing partly to the want of suitable food, the excessively wet season, and the absence of fuel, as

well as, in part, to the exactions of the Indians of the region in their barter of anything the party wanted and which the tribe could supply, for such wares and gewgaws as the Expedition leaders had remaining to dispose of. Now was it that Lewis and Clark found the irony of President Jefferson's permission that the Expedition should draw upon the United States, through any of its resident agents or bankers, for such replenishing of funds and equipment as were needed—a permission which proved in their case utterly nugatory, owing to the absence of any source through which such replenishments could be negotiated or supplied. Not even a single ship visited the mouth of the Columbia while the party remained there, from which they might have obtained the much-needed supplies and the recruiting of their resources. All, however, was borne uncomplainingly, and even cheerfully. On holidays, such as Christmas and New Year's day, the party was even boisterously gay, so hard was it to throw over the traditions of these joyous festivals. The perplexity now was how to save what remained of their little store of presents for use on the homeward voyage and for the barter for food with the tribes among whom they would temporarily sojourn on the long way back to St. Louis. Even the important matter of replenishing their supply of canoes for the toilsome up-stream voyage on the Columbia and its tributaries was a serious reflection and difficulty to the party commanders, especially as for any sort of serviceable craft the Indians at Fort Clatsop asked not only a half-carrot of tobacco, but also a laced coat!

Camp at Fort Clatsop was broken on the 23rd of March (1806), but the explorers did not withdraw from the region until the 1st of April. Before doing so, Captain Lewis left a packet with the Indians to be given to the commander of any vessel that might make a call at the port, to be forwarded to the Washington authorities, informing them of the Expedition's reaching the goal of the enterprise, and of its set out homeward, by the route by which it had come. As it happened, one vessel did call during the forthcoming summer—the brig *Lydia* (Captain Hill in command),—and to its commander was given the Lewis and Clark despatches; but as his ship was first bound for Canton, the package did not reach the United States capital from China until far on in the year 1807, and, of course, after the return of the Expedition itself.

CHAPTER XI

THE EXPEDITION SETS OUT HOMEWARD

THE return journey, which, as we have related, began at the opening of April, was, at the outset, naturally a toilsome one, owing to the arduous effort, in going up the Columbia, to make headway upstream, with its many obstructions in the way of falls and rapids. To overcome these, great expenditure of labor was necessitated at the many portages met with, though the Expedition was now lightened of many stores it had been burdened with on its way to the sea. Aside from the toil of getting over the many portages, that of dragging the loaded canoes against the stream was considerable; and for this purpose resort was had to the Indians met with for horses and dogs *en train,* to do the towing. Unfortunately, the Expedition leaders' experience in bartering for these was not an easy or pleasant one, as many of the tribes met with were unfriendly as well as hard bargain-drivers; while such of them as curiosity brought to the white men's camp were, unlike the Coast Indians, incorrigible thieves. At this point we make a digression to relate to the reader an instructive account, given by Lewis and Clark in

their "Journal," of the character of the Clatsops of the Coast, in contrast, to some extent, with those they had now experience of on the voyage up the Columbia. We quote the passage with more eagerness, as it affords an interesting view of the Indian treatment of their women and old men:

"The Clatsops and other nations at the mouth of the Columbia have visited us with great freedom, and we have endeavored to cultivate their intimacy, as well for the purpose of acquiring information as to leave behind us impressions favorable to our country. In their intercourse with us, having acquired much of their language, we are enabled with the assistance of gestures, to hold conversations with ease. We find them inquisitive and loquacious, with understandings by no means deficient in acuteness, and with very retentive memories; and though fond of feasts, and generally cheerful, they are never gay. Everything they see excites their attention and inquiries, but having been accustomed to see the whites nothing appeared to give them more astonishment than the air-gun. To all our inquiries they answer with great intelligence, and the conversation rarely slackens, since there is a constant discussion of the events, and trade, and politics, in the little but active circle of Killamucks, Clatsops, Cathlamahs, Wahkiacums, and Chinnooks. Among themselves, the conversation generally turns on the subjects of trade, or smoking, or eating, or connection with females, before whom this last is spoken of with a familiarity which would be in the highest degree indecent, if custom had not rendered it inoffensive.

"The treatment of women is often considered as the standard by which the moral qualities of savages are to be estimated. Our own observation, however, induced us to think that the importance of the female in savage life has no necessary relation to the virtues of the men, but is regulated wholly by their capacity to be useful. The Indians whose treatment of the females is mildest, and who pay most deference to their opinions, are by no means the most distinguished for their virtues; nor is this deference attended by any increase of attachment, since they are equally willing, with the most brutal husband, to prostitute their wives to strangers. On the other hand, the tribes among whom the women are very much debased possess the loftiest sense of honor, the greatest liberality, and all the good qualities of which their situation demands the exercise. Where the women can aid in procuring subsistence for the tribe, they are treated with more equality, and their importance is proportioned to the share which they take in that labor; while in countries where subsistence is chiefly procured by the exertions of the men, the women are considered and treated as burdens. Thus, among the Clatsops and Chinnooks, who live upon fish and roots, which the women are equally expert with the men in procuring, the former have a rank and influence very rarely found among Indians. The females are permitted to speak freely before the men, to whom indeed they sometimes address themselves in a tone of authority. On many subjects their judgments and opinions are respected, and, in matters of trade, their advice is generally asked and

pursued. The labors of the family, too, are shared almost equally. The men collect wood and make fires, assist in cleansing the fish, make the houses, canoes, and wooden utensils; and whenever strangers are to be entertained, or a great feast prepared, the meats are cooked and served up by the men. The peculiar province of the female is to collect roots, and to manufacture the various articles which are formed of rushes, flags, cedar-bark, and bear-grass; but the management of the canoes, and many of the occupations, which elsewhere devolve wholly on the female, are here common to both sexes.

"The observation with regard to the importance of females applies with equal force to the treatment of old men. Among tribes who subsist by hunting, the labors of the chase, and the wandering existence to which that occupation condemns them, necessarily throws the burden of procuring provisions on the active young men. As soon, therefore, as a man is unable to pursue the chase, he begins to withdraw something from the precarious supplies of the tribe. Still, however, his counsels may compensate for his want of activity; but in the next stage of infirmity, when he can no longer travel from camp to camp, as the tribe roams about for subsistence, he is then found to be a burden. In this situation they are abandoned among the Sioux, Assiniboines, and the hunting tribes on the Missouri. As they are setting out for some new excursion, where the old man is unable to follow, his children, or nearest relations, place before him a piece of meat and some water, and telling him that he has lived long enough, that it is now

time for him to go home to his relations, who could take better care of him than his friends on earth, leave him, without remorse, to perish, when his little supply is exhausted. The same custom is said to prevail among the Minnetarees, Ahnahawas, and Ricaras, when they are attended by old men on their hunting excursions. Yet, in their villages, we saw no want of kindness to old men. On the contrary, probably because in villages the means of more abundant subsistence renders such cruelty unnecessary, the old people appeared to be treated with attention, and some of their feasts, particularly the buffalo dances, were intended chiefly as a contribution for the old and infirm."

As the Expedition continued on its way up the Columbia, news was brought it, by Indians going down the river, of great destitution prevailing among the tribes higher up, many native lodges being reduced to a diet of coarse roots, since there was no game, and their store of pounded fish was exhausted. This proved embarrassing to the exploring party, especially as their hunters, who were constantly sent out in search of food, returned with nothing, save, at times, a stray duck. Higher up, a few mountain sheep and an occasional fallow deer were brought to camp, which, with a few birds' eggs, supplied temporary wants. To add to short rations, and the daily toil of portaging and towing, the party had also the discomfort of pursuing their way amid almost constant rain, and without wood to kindle a fire to cook their meals or to dry their wet clothes. At one of the falls of the river, they had also the misfortune to

lose a pirogue, containing many of their little stores. What horses they had, moreover, were afflicted with sore backs; while they lost others by their straying off over night when the camp was asleep.

The Indians in general, the "Journal" informs us, are cruel masters in their treatment of their horses; "they ride very hard, and as the saddles are so badly constructed that it is almost impossible to avoid wounding the back, yet they continue to ride when the poor creatures are scarified in a dreadful manner. At eleven o'clock we left these honest, worthy people, accompanied by our guide and the Chopunnish family, and directed our course north thirty degrees east, across an open level sandy plain, unbroken except by large banks of pure sand, which have drifted in many parts of the plain to the height of fifteen or twenty feet. The rest of the plain is poor in point of soil, but throughout is generally short grass interspersed with aromatic shrubs, and a number of plants, the roots of which supply the chief sustenance of the natives. Among these we observe a root something like the sweet potato. At the distance of ten miles we reached a branch of the Wollawollah River, rising in the same range of mountains, and empties itself six miles above the mouth of the latter. It is a bold deep stream, about ten yards wide, and seems to be navigable for canoes. The hills of this creek are generally abrupt and rocky, but the narrow bottom is very fertile, and both possess twenty times as much timber as the Columbia itself; indeed, we now find, for the first time since leaving Rockfort, an abundance of firewood. The growth

consists of cottonwood, birch, the crimson haw, red and sweet willow, chokecherry, yellow currants, gooseberry, the honeysuckle with a white berry, rose-bushes, sevenbark, sumac, together with some corn-grass and rushes. The advantage of a comfortable fire induced us, as the night was come, to halt at this place. We were soon supplied by Drewyer with a beaver and an otter, of which we took only a part of the beaver, and gave the rest to the Indians. The otter is a favorite food, though much inferior, at least in our estimation, to the dog, which they will not eat. The horse too is seldom eaten, and never except when absolute necessity compels them to eat it, as the only alternative to prevent their dying of hunger. This fastidiousness does not, however, seem to proceed so much from any dislike to the food, as from attachment to the animal itself, for many of them eat very heartily of the horse-beef which we give them. At an early hour in the morning,

" Thursday, May 1, 1805, we collected our horses, and after breakfast set out about seven o'clock, and followed the road up the creek. The low grounds and plains presented the same appearance as that of yesterday, except that the latter were less sandy. At the distance of nine miles, the Chopunnish Indian, who was in front, pointed out an old unbeaten road to the left, which he informed us was our shortest route. Before venturing, however, to quit our present road, which was level, and not only led us in the proper direction, but was well supplied with wood and water, we halted to let our horses graze till the

arrival of our other guide, who happened to be at some distance behind. On coming up he seemed much displeased with the other Indian, and declared that the road we were pursuing was the proper one; that if we decided on taking the left road, it would be necessary to remain till to-morrow morning, and then make an entire day's march before we could reach either water or wood. To this the Chopunnish assented, but declared that he himself meant to pursue that route, and we therefore gave him some powder and lead which he requested.

"Four hunters whom we had sent out in the morning joined us while we halted, and brought us a beaver for dinner. We then took our leave of the Chopunnish at one o'clock, and pursued our route up the creek, through a country similar to that we had passed in the morning. But at the distance of three miles, the hills on the north side became lower, and the bottoms of the creek widened into a pleasant country, two or three miles in extent. The timber, too, is now more abundant, and our guide tells us that we shall not want either wood or game from this place as far as the Kooskooskee. We have already seen a number of deer, of which we killed one, and observed great quantities of the curlew, as well as some cranes, ducks, prairie larks, and several species of sparrow, common to the prairies. There is, in fact, very little difference in the general face of the country here from that of the plains on the Missouri, except that the latter are enlivened by vast herds of buffalo, elk and other animals, which give it an additional interest. Over these wide bottoms we

continued on a course north, seventy-five degrees east, till, at the distance of seventeen miles from where we dined, and twenty-six from our last encampment, we halted for the night. We had scarcely encamped, when three young men came up from the Wollawollah village, with a steel trap, which had been left behind inadvertently, and which they had come a whole day's journey in order to restore. This act of integrity was the more pleasing, because, though very rare among Indians, it corresponds perfectly with the general behavior of the Wollawollahs, among whom we had lost carelessly several knives, which were always returned as soon as found. We may, indeed, justly affirm, that of all the Indians whom we have met since leaving the United States, [the East], the Wollawollahs were the most hospitable, honest, and sincere."

By May, when the Expedition reached the camps of their former friends, matters perceptibly improved, for both wood and game were now had, the latter including beaver and otter. At this period, they had reached the Kooskooskee, and here they now sought out the chief, Twisted-hair, to whom they had confided their horses when on their westward journey, and in whose country the commanders of the Expedition had *cached* their bridles and saddles and other stores they could then afford to leave behind. Having found the chief, they were nonplused to discover him sullen, and that he held himself aloof from them. An explanation of this was quickly found, as the result of catechizings of the chief, when he declared that after the Expedition

had gone on to the coast he had had a quarrel with two other chiefs of his tribe, who were jealous of the fact that the white men's horses had been entrusted to his (Twisted-hair's) care, and in the trouble that ensued the horses had got scattered. He further said, that, on the rise of the river in the Spring, the high waters had washed away the earth about the region of the *cache* and exposed the saddles, and that some of them were doubtless stolen and might not all be recovered. He, however, promised to put the party again in possession of them, and to collect, or make restitution for, the horses. This, after a parley, the chief did, much to the satisfaction of the leaders of the Expedition, though not all were recovered. Before proceeding on the journey, amity was restored in the party's relations with the chief and his tribe, and the latter was given his promised reward for the care of the horses and the Expedition's effects —two guns and a quantity of ammunition.

Here they were still west of the Bitter Root Mountains, and, these now being covered with snow, the party went into camp for a while until it would be safe to cross them and the other ranges of the Rockies. In the meantime, the Expedition's hunters killed a grizzly and brought it to camp, along with two squirrels and some pheasants, so that their immediate necessities were relieved, and ere long a move was made to the villages of the next tribe on the route—the Nez Percés. At the latter's lodges, foul weather detained them, together with pressing need of food for the party, since they had again been reduced to feeding on roots and herbs. Here they

remained for a month, that is, on as far in the season as June 10th, when they set out on a difficult trail which led to the mountains. Most of the time, the privations the explorers had to endure from want of adequate sustenance were great; while many suffered from sickness, due to the discomforts of the rainy season and a low diet. By administering medical relief to some sick Indians of the tribe, the party managed to get a share of what the natives subsisted on, added to what little their own hunters brought in for the camp-larder. By June 2nd, matters had somewhat improved in the diet line, for, it is related, that some men of the party brought to camp three bushels of edible roots and some bread, which, in their then situation, was deemed as important "as the arrival of an East Indiaman." Later on, some of the party having been sent on to the Lewis River, they returned with "some roots of cows and seventeen salmon." It is added, however, that the distance whence they brought the salmon was so great as to spoil most of the fish, though such as continued fresh were, we are told, "extremely delicious, the flesh being of a fine rose color, with a small mixture of yellow, and so fat that they were cooked very well without the addition of any oil or grease."

By the 10th of June, camp was broken, and the party proceeded eastward to the foothills of the Rockies, the hunters of the Expedition meanwhile keeping a good look-out for game. By the middle of the month, they were well within the heart of the Bitter Root range and ascending it with much toil, for it was still covered with snow. So deep was the

latter on the mountains (from twelve to fifteen feet), that the trail was frequently lost, entailing much, and often despairing, effort to recover it. This necessitated a halt, so as to send back for a guide, which, luckily, they were able to procure, and thus were enabled to pursue their course across the range in the direction of the Falls of the Missouri. The subsistence question continued still a serious one, owing to the scantiness of anything in the shape of game, though they were able to take a few trout, and, later on, a bear (in bad order, it is said), together with a deer. In the expeditions in search for food, the party were embarrassed for a time by the straying away of three men, who for a couple of days were lost in the high ridges of the region, but were subsequently found and brought into camp. With them they brought three Indians, who, for the compensation of two guns, were induced to guide them over the remaining portions of the mountain journey and bring the party to the Missouri Falls. Finally getting across the heights of the Divide, it was deemed prudent to break up the party, one section, consisting of Captain Lewis and nine men, proceeding by the most direct route to the Missouri Falls, while Captain Clark, with the remainder (now only ten men), went on to the Yellowstone, there to await the coming of the chief leader. This change in the Expedition's movements was determined on at the end of July (1806), with the design that Clark and his party should have time to build boats for the transportation of all down the Yellowstone and the Missouri. Instructions were further given Captain

Clark to despatch two mounted men of his following to the British posts on the Assiniboine, with a letter to its agent asking that official to induce some chiefs of the Sioux Indians to accompany the party in its return to St. Louis and Washington.

CHAPTER XII

HOMEWARD ACROSS THE GREAT DIVIDE AND DOWN THE YELLOWSTONE

From the beginning of July to the middle of August the Expedition was now subdivided, each party, under its own leader, taking its own way over the Great Divide on the homeward journey. The design of Captain Lewis was to proceed by the shortest route across the Rockies, thence by the eastern branch of Clark's River to the forks of the Cokalahishkit. Here the course lay through the region called by the explorers the "Knobs of the Prairie," by way of the present Montana City of Missoula, on to the Sun, or Medicine, River, which enters into the Missouri near the Falls, and so on to the former haunts of the party by the Maria River. The Clark section of the Expedition, of which the squaw Sacajawea, her husband and child formed a portion, proceeded by way of the Bitter Root River over the Continental Divide to the headwaters of the Wisdom, or Big Hole, River, thence to the forks of the Jefferson, a tributary of the Missouri. From here they were to go down the Jefferson, up the Gallatin, and over the ridges of the region to the Yellowstone,

thence to the place agreed upon as a rendezvous on the Missouri.

Here are some of the incidents which the "Journal" relates as happening to the Lewis section of the Expedition in its route up the eastern branch of the Clark River, then on by the Cokalahishkit and the Medicine Rivers to the Maria River, with an account of the general character of the region. The date is the opening days of July, 1806:

"Having made these arangements, this and the following day were employed in hunting and repairing our arms. We were successful in procuring a number of fine large deer, the flesh of which was exposed to dry. Among other animals in this neighborhood, are the dove, black woodpecker, lark woodpecker, logcock, prairie lark, sandhill crane, prairie hen, with the short and pointed tail; the robin, a species of brown plover, a few curlews, small blackbirds, ravens, hawks, and a variety of sparrows, as well as the bee martin, and several species of corvus. The mosquitoes too have been excessively troublesome since our arrival here. The Indians assert also, that there are great numbers of the white buffalo or mountain sheep, on the snowy heights of the mountains, west of Clark's River. They generally inhabit the rocky and most inaccessible parts of the mountains, but, as they are not fleet, are easily killed by the hunters.

"The Indians who had accompanied us intended leaving us in order to seek their friends, the Ootlashoots; but we prevailed on them to accompany Captain Lewis a part of his route, so as to show him

the shortest road to the Missouri, and in the meantime amused them with conversation and running races, both on foot and with horses, in both of which they proved themselves hardy, athletic and active. To the chief, Captain Lewis gave a small medal and a gun, as a reward for having guided us across the mountains; in return, the customary civility of exchanging names passed between them, by which the former acquired the title of Yomekollick, or white bearskin unfolded. The Chopunnish who had overtaken us on the 26th, made us a present of an excellent horse, for the good advice we gave him, and as a proof of his attachment to the whites, as well as of his desire to be at peace with the Pahkees. The next morning,

" July 3, all our preparations being completed, we saddled our horses, and the two parties who had been so long companions, now separated with an anxious hope of soon meeting, after each had accomplished the purpose of his destination.

" The nine men and five Indians who accompanied Captain Lewis proceeded in a direction due north, down the west side of Clark's River. Half a mile from the camp we forded Traveller's-rest Creek, and two and a half miles further, passed a western branch of the river; a mile beyond this, was a small creek on the eastern side, and, a mile lower down, the entrance of the eastern branch of the river. This stream is from ninety to one hundred and twenty yards wide, and its water, which is discharged through two channels, is more turbid than that of the main river. The latter is one hundred

and fifty yards in width, and waters an extensive level plain and prairie, which on its lower parts are ornamented with long-leafed pine and cottonwood, while the tops of the hills are covered with pine, larch, and fir. We proceeded two miles further to a place where the Indians advised us to cross, but having no boats, and timber being scarce, four hours were spent in collecting timber to make three small rafts; on which, with some difficulty and danger, we passed the river. We then drove our horses into the water and they swam to the opposite shore, but the Indians crossed on horseback, drawing at the same time their baggage alongside of them in small basins of deer skins. The whole party being now reassembled, we continued for three miles, and encamped about sunset at a small creek. The Indians now showed us a road at no great distance, which they said would lead up the eastern branch of Clark's River, and another river called Cokalahishkit, or the *river of the road to buffalo,* thence to Medicine River and the falls of the Missouri. They added, that not far from the dividing ridge of the waters of Clark's River and the Missouri, the roads forked, and though both led to the falls, the left hand route was the best. The route was so well beaten that we could no longer mistake it, and having now shown us the way, they were anxious to go on in quest of their friends, the Shahlees, besides which, they feared, by venturing further with us, to encounter the Pahkees, for we had this afternoon seen a fresh track of a horse, which they supposed to be a Shahlee scout. We could not insist on their remaining

longer with us; but as they had so kindly conducted us across the mountains, we were desirous of giving them a supply of provisions, and therefore distributed to them half of three deer, and the hunters were ordered to go out early in the morning, in hope of adding to the stock.

"July 4.—The hunters accordingly set out, but returned unsuccessful about eleven o'clock. In the meantime we were joined by a young man of the Palloatpallah tribe, who had set out a few days after us, and had followed us alone across the mountains, the same who had attempted to pass the mountains in June, while we were on the Kooskooskee, but was obliged to return. We now smoked a farewell pipe with our estimable companions, who expressed every emotion of regret at parting with us, which they felt the more, because they did not conceal their fears of our being cut off by the Pahkees. We also gave them a shirt, a handkerchief, and a small quantity of ammunition. The meat which they received from us was dried and left at this place as a store during the homeward journey. This circumstance confirms our belief that there is no route along Clark's River to the Columbian plains so near or so good as that by which we came; for, although these people mean to go for several days' journey down that river, to look for the Shahlees, yet they intend returning home by the same pass of the mountain through which they conducted us. This route is also used by all the nations whom we know west of the mountains who are in the habit of visiting the plains of the Missouri; while on the other side all the war

paths of the Pahkees, which fall into this valley of Clark's River, concentre at Traveller's-rest, beyond which these people have never ventured to the west.

"Having taken leave of the Indians, we mounted our horses, and proceeded up the eastern branch of Clark's River through the level plain in which we were encamped. At a distance of five miles we had crossed a small creek fifteen yards wide, and now entered the mountains. The river is here closely confined within the hills for two miles, when the bottom widens into an extensive prairie, and the river is one hundred and ten yards in width. We went three miles further, over a high plain succeeded by a low and level prairie, to the entrance of the Cokalahishkit. This river empties itself from the northeast, is deep, rapid, and about sixty yards wide, with banks, which though not high, are sufficiently bold to prevent the water from overflowing. The eastern branch of Clark's River is ninety yards wide above the junction, but below it spreads to one hundred. The waters of both are turbid, though the Cokalahishkit is the clearer of the two; the beds of both are composed of sand and gravel, but neither of them is navigable on account of the rapids and shoals which obstruct their currents. Before the junction of these streams, the country had been bare of trees, but as we turned up the north branch of the Cokalahishkit, we found a woody country, though the hills were high and the low grounds narrow and poor. At the distance of eight miles, in a due east course, we encamped in a bottom, where there was an abundance of excellent grass. The evening

proved fine and pleasant, and we were no longer annoyed by mosquitoes. Our only game were two squirrels, one of the kind common to the Rocky Mountains, the second a ground squirrel of a species we had not seen before. Near the place where we crossed Clark's River, we saw at a distance some wild horses, which are said, indeed, to be very numerous on this river as well as on the heads of the Yellowstone.

"July 5.—Early in the morning we proceeded on for three and a half miles, in a direction north seventy-five degrees east, then inclining to the south, crossed an extensive, beautiful, and well watered valley, nearly twelve miles in length, at the extremity of which we halted for dinner. Here we obtained a great quantity of quamash, and shot an antelope from a gang of females, who at this season herd together, apart from the bucks. After dinner we followed the course of the river eastwardly for six miles, to the mouth of a creek thirty-five yards wide, which we called Werner's Creek. It comes in from the north, and waters a high extensive prairie, the hills near which are low, and supplied with the long-leafed pine, larch, and some fir. The road then led north twenty-two degrees west, for four miles, soon after which it again turned north seventy-three degrees east, for two and a half miles, over a handsome plain, watered by Werner's Creek, to the river, which we followed on its eastern direction, through a high prairie, rendered very unequal by a vast number of little hillocks and sinkholes, and at three miles distance encamped near the entrance of a large creek,

twenty yards wide, to which we gave the name of Seaman's Creek. We had seen no Indians, although near the camp were the concealed fires of a war party, who had passed about two months ago.

"July 6.—At sunrise we continued our course eastward along the river. At seven miles distance we passed the north fork of the Cokalahishkit, a deep and rapid stream, forty-five yards in width, and like the main branch itself somewhat turbid, though the other streams of this country are clear. Seven miles further the river enters the mountains, and here end those extensive prairies on this side, though they widen in their course towards the southeast, and form an Indian route to Dearborn's River, and thence to the Missouri. From the multitude of knobs irregularly scattered through them, Captain Lewis called this country the Prairie of the Knobs. They abound in game, as we saw goats, deer, great numbers of the burrowing squirrels, some curlews, bee martins, woodpeckers, plover, robins, doves, ravens, hawks, ducks, a variety of sparrows, and yesterday observed swans on Werner's Creek. Among the plants we observed the southern wood, and two other species of shrubs, of which we preserved specimens.

"On entering the high grounds we followed the course of the river through the narrow bottoms, thickly timbered with pine and cottonwood intermixed, and variegated with the bois-rouge, which is now in bloom, the common small blue flag and pepper-grass; and at the distance of three and a half miles, reached the two forks of the river mentioned

by the Indians. They are nearly equal in width, and the road itself here forks and follows each of them. We followed that which led us in a direction north seventy-five degrees east, over a steep high hill, thence along a wide bottom to a thickly wooded side of a hill, where the low grounds are narrow, till we reached a large creek, eight miles from the forks and twenty-five from our last encampment. Here we halted for the night. In the course of the day the track of the Indians, whom we supposed to be the Pahkees, continued to grow fresher, and we passed a number of old lodges and encampments. At seven o'clock the next morning,

"July 7, we proceeded through a beautiful plain on the north side of the river, which seems here to abound in beaver. The low grounds possess much timber, and the hills are covered chiefly with pitch pine, that of the long-leafed kind having disappeared since we left the Prairie of the Knobs. At the distance of twelve miles we left the river or rather the creek, and having for four miles crossed, in a direction north fifteen degrees east, two ridges, again struck to the right, which we followed through a narrow bottom, covered with low willows and grass, and abundantly supplied with both deer and beaver. After seven miles we reached the foot of a ridge, which we ascended in a direction north forty-five degrees east, through a low gap of easy ascent from the westward, and on descending it were delighted at discovering that this was the dividing ridge between the waters of the Columbia and those of the Missouri. From this gap the Fort Mountain is

about twenty miles in a northeastern direction. We now wound through the hills and hollows of the mountains, passing several rivulets, which run to the right, and at the distance of nine miles from the gap encamped, after making thirty-two miles. We procured some beaver, and this morning saw some signs and tracks of buffalo, from which it seems those animals do sometimes penetrate to a short distance within the mountains.

"July 8.—At three miles from our camp we reached a stream, issuing from the mountains to the southwest, though it only contains water for a width of thirty feet, yet its bed is more than three times that width, and from the appearance of the roots and trees in the neighboring bottom, must sometimes run with great violence; we called it Dearborn's River. Half a mile further we observed from a height the Shishequaw Mountain, a high insulated mountain of a conic form, standing several miles in advance of the eastern range of the Rocky Mountains, and now about eight miles from us, and immediately on our road, which was in a northwest direction. But as our object was to strike Medicine River, and hunt down to its mouth in order to procure skins for the food and gear necessary for the three men who are to be left at the falls, none of whom are hunters, we determined to leave the road, and therefore proceeded due north, through an open plain, till we reached Shishequaw Creek, a stream about twenty yards wide, with a considerable quantity of timber in its low grounds. Here we halted and dined, and now felt, by the luxury of our food, that we were

approaching once more the plains of the Missouri, so rich in game. We saw a great number of deer, goats, wolves, and some barking squirrels, and for the first time caught a distant prospect of two buffalo. After dinner we followed the Shishequaw for six and a half miles, to its entrance into Medicine River, and along the banks of this river for eight miles, when we encamped on a large island. The bottoms continued low, level, and extensive; the plains too are level; but the soil of neither is fertile, as it consists of a light colored earth, intermixed with a large proportion of gravel; the grass in both is generally about nine inches high. Captain Lewis here shot a large and remarkably white wolf.

"July 10, we set out, and continued through a country similar to that of yesterday, with bottoms of wide-leafed cottonwood occasionally along the borders, though for the most part the low grounds are without timber. In the plains are great quantities of two species of prickly pear, now in bloom. Gooseberries of the common red kind are in abundance and just beginning to ripen, but there are no currants. The river had now widened to an hundred yards; is deep, crowded with islands, and in many parts rapid. At the distance of seventeen miles, the timber disappears totally from the river bottoms. About this part of the river, the wind, which had blown on our backs, and constantly put the elk on their guard, shifted round, and we then shot three of them, and a brown bear. Captain Lewis halted to skin them, while two of the men took the pack-horses forward to seek for an encamp-

ment. It was nine o'clock before he overtook them, at the distance of seven miles in the first grove of cottonwood. They had been pursued as they came along by a very large bear, on which they were afraid to fire, lest their horses, being unaccustomed to the gun, might take fright and throw them. This circumstance reminds us of the ferocity of these animals, when we were last near this place, and admonishes us to be very cautious. We saw numbers of buffalo below us, which kept up a dreadful bellowing during the night. With all our exertions we were unable to advance more than twenty-four miles, owing to the mire, through which we are obliged to travel, in consequence of the rain.

"July 13.—We formed our camp this morning at our old station, near the head of the Whitebear Islands, and immediately went to work in making gear. On opening the *cache,* we found the bear-skins entirely destroyed by the water, which, in a flood of the river, had penetrated to them. All the specimens of plants were unfortunately lost; the chart of the Missouri, however, still remained unhurt, and several articles contained in trunks and boxes had suffered but little injury; but a vial of laudanum had lost its stopper, and ran into a drawer of medicines, which it spoiled beyond recovery. The mosquitoes have been so troublesome that it was impossible even to write without the assistance of a mosquito bier. The buffalo are leaving us fast on their way to the southeast.

"July 14.—We continued making preparations for transporting our articles, and as the old deposit

was too damp, we secured the trunks on a high scaffold, covered with skins, among the thick brush on a large island; a precaution against any visit from the Indians, should they arrive before the main party arrives here. The carriage wheels were in good order, and the iron frame of the boat had not suffered materially. The buffalo have now nearly disappeared, leaving behind them a number of large wolves who are now prowling about us.

"July 15.—To our great joy Drewyer returned to-day from a long search after the horses; for we had concluded, from his long stay, that he had probably met with a bear, and with his usual intrepidity attacked the animal, in which case, if by any accident he should be separated from his horse, his death would be almost inevitable. Under this impression, we resolved to set out to-morrow in quest of him, when his return relieved us from our apprehensions. He had searched for two days before he discovered that the horses had crossed Dearborn's River, near a spot where was an Indian encampment, which seemed to have been abandoned about the time the horses were stolen, and which was so closely concealed that no trace of a horse could be seen within the distance of a quarter of a mile. He crossed the river and pursued the track of these Indians westward, till his horse became so much fatigued that he despaired of overtaking them, and then returned. These Indians we supposed to be a party of Tushepaws, who have ventured out of the mountains to hunt buffalo. During the day we were engaged in drying meat and dressing skins. At night, M'Neal,

who had been sent in the morning to examine the *cache* at the lower end of the portage, returned; but had been prevented from reaching that place by a singular adventure. Just as he arrived near Willow Run, he approached a thicket of brush, in which was a white bear, which he did not discover till he was within ten feet of him; his horse started, and wheeling suddenly round, threw M'Neal almost immediately under the bear, who started up instantly, and finding the bear raising himself on his hind feet to attack him, struck him on the head with the butt end of his musket; the blow was so violent that it broke the breech of the musket and knocked the bear to the ground, and before he recovered M'Neal, seeing a willow tree close by, sprang up, and there remained while the bear closely guarded the foot of the tree until late in the afternoon. He then went off, and M'Neal being released came down, and having found his horse, which had strayed off to the distance of two miles, returned to camp. These animals are, indeed, of a most extraordinary ferocity, and it is a matter of wonder that in all our encounters we have had the good fortune to escape. We are now troubled with another enemy, not quite so dangerous, though even more disagreeable; these are the mosquitoes, who now infest us in such myriads that we frequently get them into our throats when breathing, and the dog even howls with the torture they occasion. Having now accomplished the object of our stay, Captain Lewis determined to leave Sergeant Gass with two men and four horses to assist the party who are expected to

carry our effects over the portage, whilst he, with Drewyer, and the two Fields, with six horses, proceeded to the sources of Maria's River. Accordingly, early in the morning,

"July 16, Captain Lewis descended in a skin canoe to the lower side of Medicine River, where the horses had previously been sent, and then rode with his party to the fall of forty-seven feet, where he halted for two hours to dine, and took a sketch of the fall. In the afternoon they proceeded to the great falls, near which they slept under a shelving rock, with a happy exemption from mosquitoes. These falls have lost much of their grandeur since we saw them, the river being much lower now than at that time, though they still form a most sublime spectacle. As we came along, we met several white bear, but they did not venture to attack us. There were but few buffalo, however, the large having principally passed the river, directed their course downwards. There are, as usual, great numbers of goats and antelopes dispersed through the plains, and large flocks of geese, which raise their young about the entrance of Medicine River. We observe here also the cuckoo, or as it is sometimes called, the raincraw, a bird which is not known either within or west of the Rocky Mountains.

"July 17.—After making a second sketch of the falls, Captain Lewis directed his course north ten degrees west, with an intention of striking Maria's River at the point to which he had ascended it in 1804. The country is here spread into wide and level plains, swelling like the ocean, in which the

view is uninterrupted by a single tree or shrub, and is diversified only by the moving herds of buffalo."

On the journey, both parties fell in with game by the way, and so were relieved from the chief source of what had been their recent anxieties. So abundant was the game now, that vast herds of buffalo were passed, besides antelope and hares; while we are told that wolves were so plentiful that it was with difficulty that the party could keep them at a distance from their flanks. On their passage, the dreaded Minnetarees were encountered, the unfriendliness of whom occasioned Captain Lewis not a little anxiety and some trouble. With this exception, which, however, was a serious one, as one of the tribe was shot in an encounter with them, and Captain Lewis, in the struggle, was wounded, not much in the way of incident happened. The encounter with the rascally Minnetarees (of Fort de Prairie), which took place about the end of July, had for its scene the banks of the Maria River, down which the Lewis party was proceeding, with one of their number (Drewyer) exploring the opposite banks. Here is the account in the " Journal " of the rencontre:

" At the distance of three miles, we ascended the hills close to the river side, while Drewyer pursued the valley of the river on the opposite side. But scarcely had Captain Lewis reached the high plain, when he saw about a mile on his left, a collection of about thirty horses. He immediately halted, and by the aid of his spy-glass discovered that one-half of the horses were saddled, and that on the eminence

above the horses, several Indians were looking down towards the river, probably at Drewyer. This was a most unwelcome sight. Their probable numbers rendered any contest with them of doubtful issue; to attempt to escape would only invite pursuit, and our horses were so bad that we must certainly be overtaken; besides which, Drewyer could not yet be aware that the Indians were near, and if we ran he would most probably be sacrificed. We therefore determined to make the best of our situation, and advance towards them in a friendly manner. The flag which we had brought in case of any such accident was therefore displayed, and we continued slowly our march towards them. Their whole attention was so engaged by Drewyer, that they did not immediately discover us. As soon as they did see us, they appeared to be much alarmed and ran about in confusion, and some of them came down the hill and drove their horses within gunshot of the eminence, to which they then returned, as if to wait our arrival. When we came within a quarter of a mile, one of the Indians mounted and rode at full speed to receive us; but here, within a hundred paces of us, he halted, and Captain Lewis, who had alighted to receive him, held out his hand, and beckoned to him to approach. He only looked at us for some time, and then, without saying a word, returned to his companions with as much haste as he had advanced. The whole party now descended the hill and rode towards us. . . . When the two parties came within a hundred yards of each other, all the Indians, except one, halted; Captain Lewis

therefore ordered his two men to halt while he advanced, and after shaking hands with the Indian, went on and did the same with the others in the rear, while the Indian himself shook hands with the two men. They all now came up, and after alighting, the Indians asked to smoke with us. Captain Lewis, who was very anxious for Drewyer's safety, told him that the man who had gone down the river had the pipe, and requested that, as they had seen him, one of them would accompany R. Fields to bring him back. To this they assented, and Fields went with a young man in search of Drewyer. Captain Lewis now asked them by signs if they were the Minnetarees of the north, and was sorry to learn by their answers that his suspicion was too true. . . .

"As it was growing late Captain Lewis proposed that they should encamp together near the river; for he was glad to see them and had a great deal to say to them. They assented; and being soon joined by Drewyer, we proceeded towards the river, and after descending a very steep bluff, two hundred and fifty feet high, encamped in a small bottom. Here the Indians formed a large semicircular tent of dressed buffalo skins, in which the two parties assembled, and by the means of Drewyer, the evening was spent in conversation with the Indians. They informed us that they were a part of a large band which at present lay encamped on the main branch of Maria's River, near the foot of the Rocky Mountains, and at the distance of a day and a half's journey from this place. . . . Captain Lewis in turn informed them that he had come from a great distance up the

large river which runs towards the rising sun; that he had been as far as the great lake where the sun sets; that he had seen many nations, the greater part of whom were at war with each other, but by his mediation were restored to peace; and all had been invited to come and trade with him west of the mountains; he was now on his way home, but had left his companions at the falls, and come in search of the Minnetarees, in hopes of inducing them to live at peace with their neighbors, and to visit the trading houses which would be formed at the entrance of Maria's River. They said that they were anxious of being at peace with the Tushepaws, but those people had lately killed a number of their relations, as they proved by showing several of the party who had their hair cut as a sign of mourning. They were equally willing, they added, to come down and trade with us. Captain Lewis therefore proposed that they should send some of their young men to invite all their band to meet us at the mouth of Maria's River, and the rest of the party to go with us to that place, where he hoped to find his men, offering them ten horses and some tobacco in case they would accompany us. To this they made no reply. Finding them very fond of the pipe, Captain Lewis, who was desirous of keeping a constant watch during the night, smoked with them until a late hour, and as soon as they were all asleep, he woke R. Fields, and ordering him to rouse us all in case any Indian left the camp, as they would probably attempt to steal our horses, he lay down by the side of Drewyer in the tent with all the Indians,

while the two Fields were stretched near the fire at the mouth of it. At sunrise,

"July 27, the Indians got up and crowded round the fire near which J. Fields, who was then on watch, had carelessly left his rifle, near the head of his brother, who was still asleep. One of the Indians slipped behind him, and, unperceived, took his brother's and his own rifle, while at the same time, two others seized those of Drewyer and Captain Lewis. As soon as Fields turned round, he saw the Indian running off with the rifles, and instantly calling his brother, they pursued him for fifty or sixty yards, and just as they overtook him, in the scuffle for the rifles, R. Fields stabbed him through the heart with his knife; the Indian ran about fifteen steps and fell dead. They now ran back with their rifles to the camp. The moment the fellow touched his gun, Drewyer, who was awake, jumped up and wrested her from him. The noise awoke Captain Lewis, who instantly started from the ground and reached to seize his gun, but finding her gone, drew a pistol from his belt and turning about saw the Indian running off with her. He followed him and ordered him to lay her down, which he was doing just as the Fields came up, and were taking aim to shoot him, when Captain Lewis ordered them not to fire, as the Indian did not appear to intend any mischief. He dropped the gun and was going slowly off as Drewyer came out and asked permission to kill him, but this Captain Lewis forbid, as he had not yet attempted to shoot us. But finding that the Indians were now endeavoring to drive off all the

horses, he ordered three of them to follow the main party who were chasing the horses up the river, and fire instantly upon the thieves; while he, without taking time to run for his shot-pouch, pursued the fellow who had stolen his gun and another Indian, who were driving away the horses on the left of the camp. He pressed them so closely that they left twelve of their horses, but continued to drive off one of our own. At the distance of three hundred paces they entered a steep niche in the river bluffs, when Captain Lewis, being too much out of breath to pursue them any further, called out, as he did several times before, that unless they gave up the horse he would shoot them. As he raised his gun one of the Indians jumped behind a rock and spoke to the other, who stopped at the distance of thirty paces, as Captain Lewis shot him in the belly. He fell on his knees and right elbow, but raising himself a little, fired, and then crawled behind a rock. The shot had nearly been fatal, for Captain Lewis, who was bareheaded, felt the wind of the ball very distinctly. Not having his shot-pouch, he could not reload his rifle, and having only a single load also for his pistol, he thought it most prudent not to attack the Indians, and therefore retired slowly to the camp. He was met by Drewyer, who hearing the report of the guns, had come to his assistance, leaving the Fields to pursue the Indians. Captain Lewis ordered him to call out to them to desist from the pursuit, as we could take the horses of the Indians in place of our own, but they were at too great a distance to hear him. He therefore returned to the

camp, and whilst he was saddling the horses, the Fields returned with four of our own, having followed the Indians until two of them swam the river, two others ascended the hills, so that the horses became dispersed. We, however, were rather gainers by this contest, for we took four of the Indian horses, and lost only one of our own. . . . We had no doubt but that we should be immediately pursued by a much larger party, and that as soon as intelligence was given to the band near the Broken Mountains, they would hasten to the mouth of Maria's River to intercept us. We hope, however, to be there before them, so as to form a junction with our friends. We therefore pushed our horses as fast as we possibly could. . . . At three o'clock we reached Rose River, five miles above where we had formerly passed it, and having now come by estimate sixty-three miles, halted for an hour and a half to refresh our horses; then pursued our journey seventeen miles further, when, as the night came on, we killed a buffalo, and again stopped for two hours. The sky was now overclouded, but as the moon gave light enough to show us the route, we continued, along through immense herds of buffalo for twenty miles, and then almost exhausted with fatigue, halted at two in the morning,

"July 28, to rest ourselves and the horses. At daylight we awoke sore and scarcely able to stand; but as our own lives as well as those of our companions depended on our pressing forward, we mounted our horses and set out. The men were desirous of crossing the Missouri, at the Grog Spring,

where Rose River approaches so near the river, and passing down the southwest side of it, and thus avoid the country at the junction of the two rivers, through which the enemy would most probably pursue us. But as this circuitous route would consume the whole day, and the Indians might in the meantime attack the canoes at the point, Captain Lewis told his party it was now their duty to risk their lives for their friends and companions; that he would proceed immediately to the point, to give the alarm to the canoes, and if they had not yet arrived, he would raft the Missouri, and after hiding the baggage, ascend the river on foot through the woods till he met them. He told them also that it was his determination, in case they were attacked in crossing the plains, to tie the bridles of the horses and stand together till they had either routed their enemies, or sold their lives as dearly as possible. To this they all assented, and we therefore continued our route to the eastward, till at the distance of twelve miles we came near the Missouri, when we heard a noise which seemed like the report of a gun. We therefore quickened our pace for eight miles further, and about five miles from the Grog Spring, now heard distinctly the noise of several rifles from the river. We hurried to the bank, and saw with exquisite satisfaction our friends coming down the river. They landed to greet us, and after turning our horses loose, we embarked with our baggage, and went down to the spot where we had made a deposit. This, after reconnoitring the adjacent country, we opened; but unfortunately the *cache* had

caved in, and most of the articles were injured. We took whatever was still worth preserving, and immediately proceeded to the point, where we found our deposits in good order. By a singular good fortune we were here joined by Sergeant Gass and Willard from the falls, who had been ordered to bring the horses here, to assist in collecting meat for the voyage, as it had been calculated that the canoes would reach this place much sooner than Captain Lewis's party. After a very heavy shower of rain and hail, attended with violent thunder and lightning, we left the point, and giving a final discharge to our horses, went over to the island where we had left our red pirogue, which however we found so much decayed that we had no means of repairing her; we, therefore, took all the iron work out of her, and proceeded down the river fifteen miles, and encamped near some cottonwood trees, one of which was of the narrow-leafed kind, and the first of that species we had remarked as we ascended the river."

While these incidents were happening, Captain Clark and his party had made their way to the Jefferson, and, pushing down the latter river and the Missouri into which it falls, succeeded in effecting a junction with the Lewis contingent and in time to reinforce it against the Indians that had menaced it.

CHAPTER XIII

THE LAST OF A LONG JOURNEY

THE force now reunited on the Missouri, a little below the junction of the Yellowstone, lost no time in proceeding on its way homewards. On reaching their old friends the Mandans (August 14), the Expedition found that tribe and the Minnetarees at war with the Ricaras, while the Assiniboines of the north were at strife with the Mandans. They received a hearty welcome, however, from the latter, but were unsuccessful in their efforts to reconcile the warring tribes, and so smoked the peace-pipe with them and continued their voyage down the river. Under safer and pleasanter circumstances, the explorers pushed on towards civilization, all of the Expedition members being hungry for home news, as well as for reunion with their respective families.

The "Journal" of the Expedition, at this point, gives an interesting account of the Yellowstone River and of its favorable site for trade. The party, it will be seen, was much annoyed by mosquitoes, and it also was a sufferer by the depredations of the Indians, in having stolen the horses, which necessitated the construction of extemporized canoes, made of the skins of wild beasts, for the voyage down the Yellowstone. The extract, which is here ap-

pended, closes by an account of the meeting of two white men, hunters on the river, from whom the Expedition learned some welcome news of the outer world, with some information of Indian wars which was not so welcome to the party leaders.

"The Rochejaune, or Yellowstone River, according to Indian information, has its remote sources in the Rocky Mountains, near the peaks of the Rio del Norde, on the confines of New Mexico, to which country there is a good road during the whole distance along the banks of the Yellowstone. Its western waters are probably connected with those of Lewis's River, while the eastern branches approach the heads of Clark's River, the Bighorn, and the Platte; so that it waters the middle portion of the Rocky Mountains for several hundred miles from northwest to southeast. During its whole course from the point at which Captain Clark reached it to the Missouri, a distance which he computed at eight hundred and thirty-seven miles, this river is large and navigable for pirogues, and even batteaux, there being none of the moving sandbars which impede the navigation of the Missouri, and only a single ledge of rocks, which, however, is not difficult to pass. Even its tributary waters, the Bighorn, Clark's fork, and Tongue River, may be ascended in boats for a considerable distance. The banks of the river are low, but bold, and nowhere subject to be overflowed, except for a short distance below the mountains. The predominating color of the river is a yellowish-brown; that of the Missouri, which possesses more mud, is of a deep drab color; the bed of

the former being chiefly composed of loose pebble; which, however, diminish in size in descending the river, till after passing the Lazeka, the pebble cease as the river widens, and the mud and sand continue to form the greater part of the bottom. Over these the water flows with a velocity constantly and almost equally decreasing in proportion to its distance from the mountains. From the mountains to Clark's fork, the current may be estimated at four and a half miles per hour; thence as low as the Bighorn, at three and a half miles; between that and the Lazeka at three miles; and from that river to the Wolf rapid, at two and three-quarter miles; from which to its entrance, the general rapidity is two miles per hour. The appearance and character of the country present nearly similar varieties of fertile, rich, open lands. Above Clark's fork, it consists of high waving plains bordered by stony hills, partially supplied with pine; the middle portion, as low as the Buffalo shoals, contains less timber, and the number diminishes still lower, where the river widens, and the country spreads itself into extensive plains. Like all the branches of the Missouri which penetrate the Rocky Mountains, the Yellowstone and its streams, within that district of country beyond Clark's fork, abound in beaver and otter; a circumstance which strongly recommends the entrance of the latter river as a judicious position for the purposes of trade. To an establishment at that place, the Shoshones, both within and westward of the Rocky Mountains, would willingly resort, as they would be farther from the reach of the Blackfoot Indians, and the Minnetarees

of Fort de Prairie, than they could be in trading with any factories on the Missouri. The same motive of personal safety, would most probably induce many of the tribes on the Columbia and Lewis's River to prefer this place to the entrance of Maria's River, at least for some years; and as the Crow and Paunch Indians, the Castahanahs, and the Indians residing south of Clark's fork, would also be induced to visit it, the mouth of that river might be considered as one of the most important establishments for the western fur trade. This too may be the more easily effected, as the adjacent country possesses a sufficiency of timber for the purpose, an advantage which is not found on any spot between Clark's Fork and the Rocky Mountains.

"August 4.—The camp became absolutely uninhabitable, in consequence of the multitude of mosquitoes; the men could not work in preparing skins for clothing, nor hunt in the timbered low grounds; in short, there was no mode of escape, except by going on the sandbars in the river; where, if the wind should blow, the insects do not venture; but when there is no wind, and particularly at night, when the men have no covering except their worn-out blankets, the pain they suffer is scarcely to be endured. There was also a want of meat, for the buffalo were not to be found; and though the elk are very abundant, yet their fat and flesh is more difficult to dry in the sun, and is also much more easily spoiled than the meat or fat of either deer or buffalo. Captain Clark therefore determined to go on to some spot which should be free from mosquitoes, and furnish more game.

After having written a note to Captain Lewis, to inform him of his intention, and stuck it on a pole, at the confluence of the two rivers, he loaded the canoes at five in the afternoon, and proceeded down the river to the second point and encamped on a sandbar; but here the mosquitoes seemed to be even more numerous than above. The face of the Indian child is considerably puffed up and swollen with the bites of these animals, nor could the men procure scarcely any sleep during the night, and they continued to harass them the next morning,

"August 5, as they proceeded. On one occasion Captain Clark went on shore and ascended a hill after one of the bighorns; but the mosquitoes were in such multitudes that he could not keep them from the barrel of his rifle long enough to take aim. About ten o'clock, however, a light breeze sprung up from the northwest, and dispersed them in some degree. Captain Clark then landed on a sandbar, intending to wait for Captain Lewis, and went out to hunt. But not finding any buffalo, he again proceeded in the afternoon, and having killed a large white bear, encamped under a high bluff exposed to a light breeze from the southwest, which blew away the mosquitoes. About eleven o'clock, however, the wind became very high and a storm of rain came on, which lasted for two hours, accompanied with sharp lightning and loud peals of thunder.

"August 8, Sergeant Pryor, accompanied by Shannon, Hall, and Windsor, arrived, but without the horses. They reported that on the second day after they left Captain Clark, they halted to let the

horses graze near the bed of a large creek, which contained no running water; but soon after a shower of rain fell, and the creek swelled so suddenly, that several horses which had straggled across the dry bed of the creek, were obliged to swim back. They now determined to form their camp; but the next morning were astonished at not being able to find a single one of their horses. They immediately examined the neighborhood, and soon finding the track of the Indians who had stolen the horses, pursued them for five miles, where the fugitives divided into two parties. They now followed the largest party five miles further, till they lost all hopes of overtaking the Indians, and returned to the camp; and packing the baggage on their backs, pursued a northeast course towards the Yellowstone. On the following night a wolf bit Sergeant Pryor through the hand as he lay asleep, and made an attempt to seize Windsor, when Shannon discovered and shot him. They passed over a broken open country, and having reached the Yellowstone near Pompey's pillar, they determined to descend the river, and for this purpose made two skin canoes, such as they had seen among the Mandans and Ricaras. They are made in the following manner:—Two sticks of an inch and a quarter in diameter are tied together so as to form a round hoop, which serves for the brim, while a second hoop, for the bottom of the boat, is made in the same way, and both secured by sticks of the same size from the sides of the hoops, fastened by thongs at the edges of the hoops and at the interstices of the sticks; over this frame the skin is drawn closely and

tied with thongs, so as to form a perfect basin, seven feet and three inches in diameter, sixteen inches deep, and with sixteen ribs or cross-sticks, and capable of carrying six or eight men with their loads. Being unacquainted with the river, they thought it most prudent to divide their guns and ammunition, so that in case of accident all might not be lost, and therefore built two canoes. In these frail vessels they embarked, and were surprised at the perfect security in which they passed through the most difficult shoals and rapids of the river, without ever taking in water, even during the highest winds.

"In passing the confluence of the Yellowstone and Missouri, he took down the note from the pole, supposing that Captain Lewis had passed; and now learning where the party was, pressed on in the skin canoes to join them. The day was spent in hunting, so as to procure a number of skins to trade with the Mandans; for having now neither horses nor merchandise, our only resort in order to obtain corn and beans, is a stock of skins, which those Indians very much admire.

"August 9.—A heavy dew fell this morning. Captain Clark now proceeded slowly down the river, hunting through the low grounds in the neighborhood after the deer and elk, till late in the afternoon he encamped on the southeast side. Here they remained during the next day,

"August 10, attempting to dry the meat, while the hunters were all abroad; but they could obtain nothing except an antelope and one black-tailed deer; those animals being very scarce on this part of the

river. In the low grounds of the river Captain Clark found to-day a species of cherry which he had never seen before, and which seems peculiar to this small district of country, though even there it is not very abundant.

"The men also dug up quantities of a large and very insipid root, called by the Indians hankee, and by the engagees, the white apple. It is used by them in a dry and pounded state, so as to mix with their soup; but our men boil it and eat it with meat. In descending the river yesterday, the squaw brought in a large well-flavored gooseberry, of a rich crimson color; and a deep purple berry of a species of currant, common on this river as low as the Mandans, and called by the engagees the Indian currant.

"August 11.—The next morning Captain Clark set out early, and landed on a sandbar about ten o'clock for the purpose of taking breakfast and drying the meat. At noon they proceeded on about two miles, when they observed a canoe near the shore. They immediately landed, and were equally surprised and pleased at discovering two men, by the names of Dickson and Hancock, who had come from the Illinois on a hunting excursion up the Yellowstone. They had left the Illinois in the summer of 1804, and had spent the last winter with the Tetons, in company with a Mr. Ceautoin, who had come there as a trader, but whom they had robbed, or rather they had taken all his merchandise and given him a few robes in exchange. These men had met the boat which we had despatched from Fort Mandan, on board of which they were told there was a

Ricara chief on his way to Washington; and also another party of Yankton chiefs, accompanying Mr. Durion on a visit of the same kind. We were sorry to learn that the Mandans and Minnetarees were at war with the Ricaras, and had killed two of them. The Assiniboins too, are at war with the Mandans. They have, in consequence, prohibited the Northwestern Company from trading to the Missouri, and even killed two of their traders near the Mouse River, and are now lying in wait for Mr. M'Kenzie of the Northwestern Company, who had been for a long time among the Minnetarees. These appearances are rather unfavorable to the project of carrying some of the chiefs to the United States; but we still hope that, by effecting a peace between the Mandans, Minnetarees, and Ricaras, the views of our government may be accomplished.

"After leaving these trappers, Captain Clark went on and encamped nearly opposite the entrance of Goatpen Creek, where the party were again assailed by their old enemies, the mosquitoes."

After pushing through the country of the Tetons, among whom they did not linger, the returning explorers began now to meet whites by the way, and occasional trading parties, from whom they learned something of what had happened in the east during their long absence. After so long an interval, the sight of anyone who could give them information of what had transpired at home was, as the Journal relates, peculiarly delightful. Of one item of news they heard with manifest interest, namely, that in the United States the Expedition party had been

given up for lost, "people generally believing that they never would be heard of again," though President Jefferson, it was reported, had hopes of once more seeing them. Ere this, we should have mentioned the fact, that at the Mandan villages, among their local allies the Minnetarees, one of whose neighbor chiefs, ("Big-white"), with his wife and son, was to accompany the Expedition leaders to Washington, the explorers parted with the faithful squaw, Sacajawea, her child, and French interpreter husband (Chaboneau). Of this incident, an entry in the "Journal," under date August 17, preserves the record. It is as follows:

"The principal chiefs of the Minnetarees came down to bid us farewell, as none of them could be prevailed to go on with us. This circumstance induced our interpreter, Chaboneau, with his wife and child, to remain here, as he could be no longer useful; and notwithstanding our offer to take him with us to the United States, he said that he had there no acquaintance, and no chance of making a livelihood, and preferred remaining among the Indians. This man has been very serviceable to us, and his wife particularly useful among the Shoshones. Indeed, she has borne with a patience truly admirable the fatigues of so long a route, encumbered with the charge of an infant, who is even now only nineteen months old. We therefore paid him his wages, amounting to five hundred dollars and thirty-three cents, including the price of a horse and a lodge purchased of him; and soon afterwards dropped down to the village of the Big-white, attended on shore by

all the Indian chiefs who went to take leave of him. We found him surrounded by his friends, who sat in a circle smoking, while the women were crying. He immediately sent his wife and son, with their baggage, on board, accompanied by the interpreter and his wife, and two children; and then after distributing among his friends some powder and ball, which we had given to him, and smoking a pipe with us, went with us to the river side. The whole village crowded about us, and many of the people wept aloud at the departure of the chief.

"As Captain Clark was shaking hands with the principal chiefs of all the villages, they requested that he would sit with them one moment longer. Being willing to gratify them, he stopped and ordered a pipe, after smoking which, they informed him that when they first saw us, they did not believe all that we then told them; but having now seen that our words were all true, they would carefully remember them, and follow our advice; that he might tell their Great Father that the young men should remain at home and not make war on any people except in defence of themselves. They requested him to tell the Ricaras to come and visit them without fear, as they meant that nation no harm, but were desirous of peace with them. On the Sioux, however, they had no dependence, and must kill them whenever they made war-parties against their country. Captain Clark, in reply, informed them that we had never insisted on their not defending themselves, but requested only that they would not strike those whom we had taken by the hand; that we would apprise

the Ricaras of their friendly intentions, and that, although we had not seen those of the Sioux with whom they were at war, we should relate their conduct to their Great Father, who would take measures for producing a general peace among all his red children."

After parting with the Mandans and their friendly people, the Expedition proceeds on its homeward journey down the Missouri, a change in the course of which was noted by the party. Presently the villages of the Ricaras are come to, where some Cheyennes are met with and described. Finally, after a pow-wow with Big-white, the Mandan chief, and an exchange of ceremonial compliments, the Expedition continues its way homeward.

"Since we passed in 1804, a very obvious change has taken place in the current and appearance of the Missouri. In places where at that time there were sandbars, the current of the river now passes, and the former channel of the river is in turn a bank of sand. Sandbars then naked are covered with willows several feet high; the entrance of some of the creeks and rivers changed in consequence of the quantity of mud thrown into them; and in some of the bottoms are layers of mud eight inches in depth.

"August 21.—We rose after a night of broken rest, owing to the mosquitoes, and having put our arms in order, so as to be prepared for an attack, continued our course. We soon met three traders, two of whom had wintered with us among the Mandans in 1804, and who were now on their way there. They had exhausted all their powder and lead; we

therefore supplied them with both. They informed us that seven hundred Sioux had passed the Ricara towns on their way to make war against the Mandans and Minnetarees, leaving their women and children encamped near the Big-bend of the Missouri, and that the Ricaras all remained at home, without taking any part in the war. They also told us that the Pawnee, or Ricara chief, who went to the United States in the Spring of 1805, died on his return near Sioux River.

"We then left them, and soon afterwards arrived opposite to the upper Ricara villages. We saluted them with the discharge of four guns, which they answered in the same manner; and on our landing we were met by the greater part of the inhabitants of each village, and also by a band of Cheyennes, who were encamped on a hill in the neighborhood.

"As soon as Captain Clark stepped on shore, he was greeted by the two chiefs to whom we had given medals on our last visit, and as they, as well as the rest, appeared much rejoiced at our return, and desirous of hearing from the Mandans, he sat down on the bank, while the Ricara and Cheyennes formed a circle round him; and after smoking, he informed them, as he had already done the Minnetarees, of the various tribes we had visited, and our anxiety to promote peace among our red brethren. He then expressed his regret at their having attacked the Mandans, who had listened to our counsels, and had sent on a chief to smoke with them, and to assure them that they might now hunt in the plains, and visit the Mandan villages in safety, and concluded

by inviting some of the chiefs to accompany us to Washington. The man whom we had acknowledged as the principal chief when we ascended, now presented another, who he said was a greater chief than himself, and to him, therefore, he had surrendered the flag and medal with which we had honored him. This chief, who was absent at our last visit, is a man of thirty-five years of age, a stout, well-looking man, and called by the Indians, Gray-eyes.

"He now made a very animated reply. He declared that the Ricaras were willing to follow the counsels we had given them, but a few of their bad young men would not live in peace, but had joined the Sioux, and thus embroiled them with the Mandans. These young men had, however, been driven out of the villages, and as the Ricaras were now separated from the Sioux, who were a bad people, and the cause of all their misfortunes, they now desired to be at peace with the Mandans, and would receive them with kindness and friendship. Several of the chiefs he said were desirous of visiting their Great Father, but as the chief who went to the United States last summer had not returned, and they had some fears for his safety, on account of the Sioux, they did not wish to leave home until they heard of him. With regard to himself, he would continue with his nation, to see that they followed our advice.

"The sun being now very hot, the chief of the Cheyennes invited us to his lodge, which was at no great distance from the river. We followed him, and found a very large lodge, made of twenty buffalo skins, surrounded by eighteen or twenty lodges,

nearly equal in size. The rest of the nation are expected to-morrow, and will make the number of one hundred and thirty or fifty lodges, containing from three hundred and fifty to four hundred men, at which the men of the nation may be computed. These Cheyennes are a fine-looking people, of a large stature, straight limbs, high cheek-bones and noses, and of a complexion similar to that of the Ricaras. Their ears are cut at the lower part, but few wear ornaments in them; the hair is generally cut over the eyebrows and small ornaments fall down the cheeks, the remainder being either twisted with horse or buffalo hair, and divided over each shoulder, or else flowing loosely behind. Their decorations consist chiefly of blue beads, shells, red paint, brass rings, bears' claws, and strips of otter skins, of which last they, as well as the Ricaras, are very fond. The women are coarse in their features, with wide mouths, and ugly. Their dress consists of a habit falling to the mid-leg, and made of two equal pieces of leather, sewed from the bottom with arm holes, with a flap hanging nearly half way down the body, both before and behind. These are burnt various figures, by means of a hot stick, and adorned with beads, shells, and elks' tusks, which all Indians admire. The other ornaments are blue beads in the ears, but the hair is plain and flows down the back. The summer dress of the men is a simple buffalo robe, a cloth round the waist, moccasins, and occasionally leggings. Living remote from the whites, they are shy and cautious, but are peaceably disposed, and profess to make war against no people

except the Sioux, with whom they have been engaged in contests immemorially. In their excursions they are accompanied by their dogs and horses, which they possess in great numbers, the former serving to carry almost all their light baggage. After smoking for some time, Captain Clark gave a small medal to the Cheyenne chief, and explained at the same time the meaning of it. He seemed alarmed at this present, and sent for a robe and a quantity of buffalo meat, which he gave to Captain Clark, and requested him to take back the medal, for he knew that all white people were medicine, and he was afraid of the medal, or of anything else which the white people gave to the Indians. Captain Clark then repeated his intention in giving the medal, which was the medicine his Great Father had directed him to deliver to all chiefs who listened to his word and followed his counsels; and that, as he had done so, the medal was given as a proof that we believed him sincere. He now appeared satisfied and received the medal, in return for which he gave double the quantity of buffalo meat he had offered before. He seemed now quite reconciled to the whites, and requested that some traders might be sent among the Cheyennes, who lived, he said, in a country full of beaver, but did not understand well how to catch them, and were discouraged from it by having no sale for them when caught. Captain Clark promised that they should be soon supplied with goods, and taught the best mode of catching beaver.

"The Big-white, chief of the Mandans, now ad-

dressed them at some length, explaining the pacific intentions of his nation; and the Cheyenne observed that both the Ricaras and Mandans seemed to be in fault; but at the end of the council the Mandan chief was treated with great civility, and the greatest harmony prevailed among them. The great chief, however, informed us, that none of the Ricaras could be prevailed on to go with us till the return of the other chief, and that the Cheyennes were a wild people, and afraid to go. He invited Captain Clark to his house, and gave him two carrots of tobacco, two beaver skins, and a trencher of boiled corn and beans. It is the custom of all the nations on the Missouri to offer to every white man food and refreshment when he first enters their tents.

"Captain Clark returned to the boats, where he found the chief of the lower village, who had cut off part of his hair, and disfigured himself in such a manner that we did not recognize him at first, until he explained that he was in mourning for his nephew, who had been killed by the Sioux. He proceeded with us to the village on the island, where we were met by all the inhabitants. The second chief, on seeing the Mandan, began to speak to him in a loud and threatening tone, till Captain Clark declared that the Mandans had listened to our counsels, and that, if any injury was done to the chief, we should defend him against every nation. He then invited the Mandan to his lodge, and after a very ceremonious smoking, assured Captain Clark that the Mandan was as safe as at home, for the Ricaras had opened their ears to our counsels, as well as the

Mandans. This was repeated by the great chief, and the Mandan and Ricara chiefs now smoked and conversed in great apparent harmony; after which we returned to the boats."

Little remains now to be added to the story we have, we fear, imperfectly related. To those desirous of learning more in detail of the doings of and happenings to the Expedition, we cannot do better than to refer such to the valuable "Journal-History of the Exploring Expedition," an excellent and tasteful reprint of which, in 3 vols., was issued by the New Amsterdam Book Company, New York, 1902. Our own indebtedness to the work has been large. In taking leave of our task, we add, as our last gleanings from the "Journal," its closing narrative, under dates September 21-23, 1806. Just before this, the Expedition, on the closing days of the return voyage, had just passed the mouth of the Osage River, and made a brief halt at the little French village of La Charette. Here, Lewis and Clark express their own and their party's delight at witnessing some cows feeding on the banks, at which, as they say, "the whole party almost involuntarily raised a shout of joy at seeing this image of civilization and domestic life." Here are the closing entries:

"Having come (from their last stopping-place) sixty-eight miles, and the weather threatening to be bad, we remained at La Charette till the next morning.

"Sunday (September), 21, when we proceeded, and as several settlements have been made during our absence, were refreshed with the sight of men

and cattle along the banks. We also passed twelve canoes of Kickapoo Indians, going on a hunting excursion. At length, after coming forty-eight miles, we saluted, with heartfelt satisfaction, the village of St. Charles, and on landing were treated with the greatest hospitality and kindness by all the inhabitants of that place. Their civility detained us till ten o'clock the next morning.

Monday, 22, when the rain having ceased, we set out for Coldwater Creek, about three miles from the mouth of the Missouri, where we found a cantonment of troops of the United States, with whom we passed the day, and then,

Tuesday, 23, descended to the Mississippi, and round to St. Louis, where we arrived at twelve o'clock, and having fired a salute went on shore and received the heartiest and most hospitable welcome from the whole village."

Here ends the records of the interesting and highly useful Expedition. In two years and a half, it had traversed close upon 9,000 miles of, at the period, unexplored wilderness, and that at but little expense to the nation, and with the loss of only one man. The wealth of information its leaders placed at the service of the Government and the country, in their voluminous and instructive journals, was at the time of the highest service to both; while to-day, now close upon a hundred years after the era of the Expedition, the pages of the work are still found rich in useful and illuminative matter. Well did its members earn the glory which was theirs, on the return of the party to civilization, with the more sub-

stantial rewards of a grateful nation—Congress, besides giving a soldier's double pay to each member of the Expedition for the time in which they were absent, also making to each a generous grant of land from the public domain. To the indefatigable leaders of the party, Congress was also mindful, deeding to Captain Lewis land to the extent of 1,500 acres, and to his loyal colleague, Captain Clark, 1,000 acres.

Besides these awards, in acknowledgment of their great and devoted services, Captain Lewis, in the following year (March 3, 1807), was appointed Governor of Louisiana Territory, with his headquarters at St. Louis, an honored post which, unhappily, he did not live long to enjoy, as he died, it is said by his own hand while suffering from hypochondria, on the 11th of October, 1809, at the early age of thirty-five. To Captain Clark, a few days after his colleague's appointment as Governor, was given a commission by President Jefferson as Indian agent and brigadier-general of the Louisiana territorial militia. Four years after the death of the lamented Lewis, Captain Clark was named as his successor in the Governorship, the territory, meanwhile, having been changed to that of Missouri. This office Clark held until 1822, when Missouri was admitted as a State; after which he became Superintendent of Indian Affairs. This post he held with high credit to himself until his death, in his sixty-eighth year, an event which occurred at St. Louis, September 1, 1838.

LIFE, EXPLORATIONS,

AND PUBLIC SERVICES

OF

JOHN CHARLES FREMONT

BY

CHARLES WENTWORTH UPHAM

EDITED BY

G. MERCER ADAM

PREFACE

THE second and third chapters of this work, embracing the period covered by the first two expeditions, have substantially the value and authority of an autobiography. Fremont tells his own story in passages extracted from his Reports. This part of the volume, barring a slight omission, gives a perfectly authentic account—as good as can be found—of the interior of the North American continent, its great features, and the races that occupy it. The Rocky Mountains, the parallel range of the Sierra Nevada, with the Basin—so full of strange interest, and not yet wholly made known to geography—between them; and the Pacific regions, are here described, in his own fresh and effective style, by their explorer.

The topics of the work, generally, are regarded by the writer as having an interest and dignity entirely independent of any of the excitements and political operations of the day; and it has been prepared with no other feeling than to present what men of all parties and sections will hereafter recognize as a true picture of a character and a life that have justly attracted attention and will occupy a permanent place in our annals.

The facts have been, in part, gathered from public records and sources open to all. Many of the details and dates, with some very interesting documents, were obtained from Colonel Fremont. But for all the sentiments and opinions advanced in the work the writer is wholly and exclusively responsible.

JOHN CHARLES FREMONT

CHAPTER I

Parentage.—Education.—Early History.

JOHN CHARLES FREMONT was born on the 21st of January, 1813. The usual residence of his family was in the city of Charleston, South Carolina. His father, who bore the same name, was deeply interested in studying the character and condition of the North American Indians, and spent the last years of his life in visiting many of their tribes. On these excursions he took his family with him, and moved slowly, stopping leisurely at the larger towns and points of chief interest. It was on one of these tours that the subject of this memoir was born, in the city of Savannah. The father, following his favorite pursuit, subsequently visited with his family, and remained for greater or less periods of time in various parts of Georgia, Tennessee, the Carolinas, and Virginia. The mother, celebrated for her beauty and worth, was Ann Beverly Whiting, a native of Gloucester County, Virginia. Her family

was connected with many distinguished names, including that of Washington, to whom she was nearly related.

The father died in 1818, leaving a widow and three children, two sons and a daughter. Colonel Fremont is the sole survivor of his family, with the exception of an orphan niece, the daughter of his brother, who since nine years of age has been a member of his family. The mother died in 1847, at Aiken, South Carolina; the brother and sister some years before.

After the death of her husband, Mrs. Fremont remained some time in Virginia, where John Charles received the rudiments of his education, at Dinwiddie Court House. She then removed back to Charleston, where she fixed her residence, and the education of her children was continued. Although born and reared in affluence, and accustomed to the free and liberal expenditures of the hospitable and generous class to which her Virginia relatives belonged, she was left with her young charge in very limited circumstances, but, fortunately in a community which appreciated her claims to respect, sympathy, and all kind offices. She is still remembered by many faithful friends in Charleston as a lady of great piety and worth.

When John Charles was about thirteen years of age, John W. Mitchell, a lawyer in Charleston, a gentleman of great respectability, in no way connected with the family, but actuated only by benevolent impulses, although perceiving it is not unlikely the bright promise of the lad, took him into his office

for the purpose of making a lawyer of him. At a subsequent period it became a favorite object of Mr. Mitchell to have him prepare himself for the ministry of the church.

Mr. Mitchell placed him under the tuition of Dr. Roberton, a learned instructor at that time in Charleston. Dr. Roberton published an edition of Xenophon's "Anabasis" in 1850. In the preface he gives the following account of the youth whom Mr. Mitchell placed in his hands. It is an interesting document, and shows how the character which Colonel Fremont has ever exhibited was formed, and illustrates the early development of the energy and talent that have borne him on through life:—

"For your further encouragement, I will here relate a very remarkable instance of patient diligence and indomitable perseverance.

"In the year 1827, after I had returned to Charleston from Scotland, and my classes were going on, a very respectable lawyer came to my school, I think some time in the month of October, with a youth apparently about sixteen or perhaps not so much, of middle size, graceful in manners, rather slender, but well formed, and, upon the whole, what I should call handsome; of a keen, piercing eye, and a noble forehead, seemingly the very seat of genius. The gentleman stated that he found him given to study, that he had been about three weeks learning the Latin rudiments, and (hoping, I suppose, to turn the youth's attention from the law to the ministry,) had resolved to place him under my care for the purpose of learning Greek, Latin, and Mathe-

matics, and thereby enable him to enter Charleston College. I very gladly received him, for I immediately perceived he was no common youth, as intelligence beamed in his dark eye and shone brightly on his countenance, indicating great ability and an assurance of his future progress. I at once put him in the highest class, just beginning to read Cæsar's "Commentaries" and although at first inferior his prodigious memory and enthusiastic application soon enabled him to surpass the best. He began Greek at the same time, and read with some who had been long at it, in which he also soon excelled. In short, in the space of one year he had with the class, and at odd hours with myself, read four books of Cæsar, Cornelius Nepos, Sallust, six books of Virgil, nearly all Horace, and two books of Livy; and in Greek, all the Græca Minora, about half of the first volume of the Græca Majora, and four books of Homer's "Iliad." And whatever he read he retained. It seemed to me, in fact, as if he learned by mere intuition. I was myself utterly astonished, and at the same time delighted, with his progress. I have hinted that he was designed for the Church, but when I contemplated his bold, fearless disposition, his powerful inventive genius, his admiration of warlike exploits, and his love of heroic and adventurous deeds, I did not think it likely he would be a minister of the Gospel. He had not, however, the least appearance of any vice whatever. On the contrary, he was always the very pattern of virtue and modesty. I could not help loving him, so much did he captivate me by his gentlemanly conduct and extraordinary

progress. It was easy to see that he would one day raise himself to eminence. Whilst under my instruction, I discovered his early genius for poetic composition in the following manner: When the Greek class read the account that Herodotus gives of the battle of Marathon, the bravery of Miltiades and his ten thousand Greeks raised his patriotic feelings to enthusiasm, and drew from him expressions which I thought were embodied, a few days afterwards, in some well-written verses in a Charleston paper on that far-famed, unequal but successful conflict against tyranny and oppression; and suspecting my talented scholar to be the author, I went to his desk and asked him if he did not write them. He, hesitating at first, rather blushingly confessed that he did. I then said: 'I knew you could do such things, and suppose you have some such pieces by you, which I should like to see. Do bring them to me.' He consented, and in a day or two brought me a number, which I read with pleasure and admiration at the strong marks of genius stamped on all, but here and there requiring, as I thought, slight amendment.

"I had hired a mathematician to teach both him and myself, (for I could not then teach that science,) and in this he also made such wonderful progress that at the end of one year he entered the Junior Class in Charleston College triumphantly, while others who had been studying four years and more were obliged to take the Sophomore Class. About the end of the year 1828 I left Charleston. After that he taught Mathematics for some time. His

career afterwards has been one of heroic adventure, of hair-breadth escapes by flood and field, and of scientific explorations, which have brought him world-wide renown. In a letter I received from him lately, he expresses his gratitude to me in the following words: 'I am very far from either forgetting you or neglecting you, or in any way losing the old regard I had for you. There is no time to which I go back with more pleasure than that spent with you, for there was no time so thoroughly well spent; and of anything I may have learned, I remember nothing so well, and so distinctly, as what I acquired with you.' Here I cannot help saying that the merit was almost all his own. It is true that I encouraged and cheered him on, but if the soil into which I put the seeds of learning had not been of the richest quality, they would never have sprung up a hundredfold in the full ear."

Fremont was confirmed, in his seventeenth year, as a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in which communion he was brought up. Immediately after leaving college, which was before the close of the academic term, he opened a school in Charleston. At such hours as he could command, he attended in other schools to instruct classes in mathematics; and, in addition to all these labors, took charge for a considerable period of an evening school. Persons who have been engaged in similar pursuits can appreciate how exhausting such continuous labors must have been, so early did he develop the indefatigable energy and power of endurance that have marked his whole subsequent life.

Soon after this, he was engaged in the survey of the railroad leading from Charleston to Hamburg. About the beginning of the year 1833, the sloop of war *Natchez* arrived in Charleston, to enforce the proclamation of President Jackson. By the influence of Mr. Poinsett, afterwards Secretary of War, and others friendly to his family, young Fremont obtained the situation of teacher of mathematics and instructor of the midshipmen on board the *Natchez,* and sailed in her in that capacity to the Brazilian station. At the termination of her cruise, she returned to New York. After appearing before a board of examiners in Baltimore, Mr. Fremont was regularly commissioned as a professor of mathematics in the navy, and assigned to the frigate *Independence.* The distinguished manner in which he passed the examination coming to the ears of the Faculty of the College in Charleston, they instantly conferred upon him the academic degree of both Bachelor and Master of Arts.

An Act of Congress, passed on the 30th of April, 1824, authorized the President of the United States "to employ two or more skilful civil engineers, and such officers of the corps of engineers, or who may be detailed to do duty with that corps, as he may think proper, to cause the necessary surveys, plans, and estimates to be made of the routes of such roads and canals as he may deem of national importance, in a commercial or military point of view, or for the transportation of the public mail." Under this Act, Mr. Fremont received his first appointment in that branch of the public service, where so signal distinc-

tion and wide renown were in reserve for him. President Jackson selected him to be associated as a civil engineer with Captain Williams of the topographical corps of engineers,—an officer of distinguished merit, and who will ever be remembered as one of the heroes that fell at Monterey,—in making a survey, plans, and estimates of the route of the Charleston and Cincinnati Railroad. Resigning his commission in the navy, he repaired with alacrity to his chosen work. The portion of the route assigned him was the mountain regions of the Carolinas and Tennessee, and he there commenced those observations and explorations which have since extended over such immense regions. The winter of 1837 and 1838 was spent also under Captain Williams, in a survey of the Cherokee country, in conducting the field-work, and participating in preparing the military map which was the result of the expedition.

During the administration of Mr. Van Buren, an Act was passed and approved by him on the 5th of July, 1838, to increase the military establishment. The fourth section required that the corps of topographical engineers should be organized and increased, by regular promotion in the same, so that the said corps should consist of one colonel, one lieutenant colonel, four majors, ten captains, ten first lieutenants, and ten second lieutenants; and the fifth section ordained that the vacancies created by said organization, over and above those which could be filled by the corps itself, should be taken from the army, and from such as it may be deemed advisable

of the civil engineers employed under the Act of the 30th of April, 1824.

This latter clause let in Mr. Fremont. It was probably designed to do so, as his friend and patron, Mr. Poinsett, was then Secretary of War. He was accordingly commissioned, two days afterwards, on the 7th of July, 1838, as a second lieutenant of the topographical engineers. About this time he had been transferred to the theatre of his fame, the field where his great work in life was to be done.

A thorough exploration and survey of the vast region north of the Missouri, and west of the Mississippi, was deemed by the Administration to have become necessary, and arrangements were made to accomplish it. Mr. Nicholet, a learned and distinguished astronomer and man of science, a member of the French Academy, and a gentleman of great general accomplishments and worth, then residing in St. Louis, was appointed to conduct the service. He requested to have associated with him a younger person to act as his assistant with the requisite qualities of science, energy, courage, and enterprise. Mr. Poinsett offered the situation to Lieutenant Fremont, who promptly and gladly accepted it. The years 1838 and 1839 were spent in this field, and the whole country was explored up to the British line. Mr. Fremont participated zealously in the work and in making the map of that region which was presented to the government by Mr. Nicholet. In the course of these surveys there were seventy thousand meteorological observations, and the topography was minutely determined by the

proper calculations at innumerable points. The map thus constructed has been the source from which all subsequent ones relating to that region have been derived.

In the Spring of 1841, Lieutenant Fremont went in command of a small party to survey the Desmoines River.

On the 19th of October, 1841, he was married, in the city of Washington, to Jessie, daughter of the Hon. Thomas H. Benton, a Senator in Congress from the State of Missouri. It is not at all strange that objections were made to the match. A second lieutenant —in a corps where promotion is very slow, and having no other means of support than the unreasonably small pay allowed to subordinate officers in our army,—surely had nothing to recommend him in the way of worldly goods or prospects. He had not then commenced his great career,—no world-wide lustre had begun to emblazon his name, —no perilous adventures on a broad theatre had drawn out, to general view, his heroic qualities. But the instincts of a pure heart are often the truest wisdom; and he was preferred before all that fashion, wealth, and great station could offer.

All knew the pride and fidelity with which Colonel Benton, since that time, cherished the character of his son-in-law. Bereft of his own sons by early death, his heart gathered its affections around Fremont. He has four daughters, all living, and all married. Mrs. Fremont, the second daughter, was born in Virginia, at the family seat of her grandfather, Colonel McDowell, on the 31st May, 1824.

All that it would be proper to say of her in this work, is all that could be said of any woman,—she was worthy of her origin and of her lot.

We have now reached the point at which Mr. Fremont arrested that universal attention which since has followed him. His two early expeditions, on a large scale, will be related mostly in his own language, in consecutive extracts from his Reports published by Congress. The first Report was republished, together with the second, by an order of the Senate of the United States, passed March 3, 1845. These Reports at once established his reputation as a scientific explorer and heroic adventurer. Large editions of them have been reprinted in this country, and also in England, and they have been noticed with the highest commendation in the various literary and scientific journals at home and abroad. The Smithsonian Institution inserted among its publications a description of the plants collected by him in California, prepared by John Torrey, F. L. S., with illustrative plates, entitled "Plantæ Fremontianæ." Nothing has contributed more to the honor of our country than the manner in which its gallant and enlightened officers have conducted various exploring expeditions and prepared reports of them. A rich and interesting body of national literature has thus been accumulated. Fremont's Reports of his first and second expedition at once gave him an European reputation, which has not yet been rivalled.

Of the literary style of these Reports, the reader will be able to judge from the following chapters.

CHAPTER II

First Expedition.—Prairies.—Fort Laramie.—South Pass.—The Rocky Mountains.—The Platte or Nebraska River.

THE first expedition of Lieutenant Fremont, in command of an exploring party on a large scale, occupied the summer of 1842, and embraced the country between the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains, along the line of the Kansas and the Great Platte, or Nebraska, River. Having received his instructions from Colonel J. J. Abert, chief of the corps of topographical engineers, he left Washington City on the 2d of May, and arrived at St. Louis, by way of New York, on the 22d of that month, where he made the chief preparations for the service. Having ascended the Missouri in a steamboat, he proceeded to Choteau's Landing, on the right bank of the Kansas, about ten miles from its mouth, and six miles beyond the western boundary of Missouri. Here the final arrangements were completed, every requisite being provided for, and the expedition organized into working order and shape.

The party, which had been collected in St. Louis, consisted principally of Creole and Canadian voyageurs, who had been trained to prairie life and wilderness adventures in the employ of fur companies in the Indian country, and consisted of twenty-two men. Besides them, there was Mr. Charles Preuss,

a native of Germany, who had been thoroughly educated to sketch the topographical features of a country, and to whose extraordinary skill and enthusiasm, in the prosecution of the service assigned him, Colonel Fremont has always borne the most affectionate and grateful testimony. Mr. L. Maxwell was engaged as a hunter, and Christopher Carson, celebrated the world over for his genius and exploits as a mountaineer, and everywhere known as Kit Carson, was the guide of the expedition. Henry Brant, a son of Col. J. H. Brant, of St. Louis, nineteen years of age, and Randolph, a son of Colonel Benton, twelve years of age, also accompanied it. The latter, of course, was especially under the charge of Mr. Fremont. Such an experience, it was thought, would be favorable to his physical and mental development; and it may well be supposed that an interesting lad of that age would be a source of amusement and an object of attachment to men whose mode of life had given them but little opportunity to enjoy the society of such a companion. Randolph was undoubtedly the pet and the pride of the party. Eight men conducted as many carts, which contained stores, baggage, and instruments, and were each drawn by two mules. All the rest were well armed and mounted. A few extra horses, and four oxen, as an addition to the stock of provisions, completed the train. It started on the morning of Friday, the 10th of June, 1842. Mr. Choteau accompanied the party until they met an Indian whom he had engaged to conduct them some forty miles, thus giving them a fair start.

It will be well, before entering upon a detail of the adventures of the expedition in its route, to describe the general regulations and ordinary arrangements, in travel and in camp, from day to day.

"During our journey, it was the customary practice to encamp an hour or two before sunset, when the carts were disposed so as to form a sort of barricade around a circle some eighty yards in diameter. The tents were pitched, and the horses hobbled and turned loose to graze; and but a few minutes elapsed before the cooks of the messes, of which there were four, were busily engaged in preparing the evening meal. At nightfall the horses, mules, and oxen were driven in, and picketed—that is, secured by a halter, of which one end was tied to a small steel-shod picket, and driven into the ground; the halter being twenty or thirty feet long, which enabled them to obtain a little food during the night. When we had reached a part of the country where such a precaution became necessary, the carts being regularly arranged for defending the camp, guard was mounted at eight o'clock, consisting of three men, who were relieved every two hours; the morning watch being horse guard for the day. At daybreak the camp was roused, the animals turned loose to graze, and breakfast was generally over between six and seven o'clock, when we resumed our march, making regularly a halt at noon for one or two hours. Such was usually the order of the day, except when some accident forced a variation; which, however, happened but rarely."

The party was now fairly afloat on the boundless

ocean of prairie; the Indian guide had left, and the excitements and perils of the service began.

"We reached the ford of the Kansas late in the afternoon of the 14th, where the river was two hundred and thirty yards wide, and there commenced preparations for crossing. I had expected to find the river fordable; but it had been swollen by the late rains, and was sweeping by with an angry current, yellow and turbid as the Missouri. Up to this point, the road we had travelled was a remarkably fine one, well beaten, and level—the usual road of a prairie country. By our route, the ford was one hundred miles from the mouth of the Kansas River. Several mounted men led the way into the stream to swim across. The animals were driven in after them, and in a few minutes all had reached the opposite bank in safety, with the exception of the oxen, which swam some distance down the river, and, returning to the right bank, were not got over until the next morning. In the meantime, the carts had been unloaded and dismantled, and an India-rubber boat, which I had brought with me for the survey of the Platte River, was placed in the water. The boat was twenty feet long, and five broad, and on it were placed the body and wheels of a cart, with the load belonging to it, and three men with paddles.

"The velocity of the current, and the inconvenient freight, rendering it difficult to be managed, Basil Lajeunesse, one of our best swimmers, took in his teeth a line attached to the boat, and swam ahead in order to reach a footing as soon as possible and assist in drawing her over. In this manner, six passages

had been successfully made, and as many carts with their contents, and a greater portion of the party deposited on the left bank; but night was drawing near, and, in our anxiety to have all over before the darkness closed in, I put upon the boat the remaining two carts, with their accompanying loads. The man at the helm was timid on water, and, in his alarm, capsized the boat. Carts, barrels, boxes, and bales, were in a moment floating down the current; but all the men who were on the shore jumped into the water, without stopping to think if they could swim, and almost everything—even heavy articles, such as guns and lead—was recovered.

"Two of the men who could not swim came nigh being drowned, and all the sugar belonging to one of the messes wasted its sweets on the muddy waters; but our heaviest loss was a bag of coffee, which contained nearly all our provision. It was a loss which none but a traveller in a strange and inhospitable country can appreciate; and often afterward, when excessive toil and long marching had overcome us with fatigue and weariness, we remembered and mourned over our loss in the Kansas. Carson and Maxwell had been much in the water yesterday, and both, in consequence, were taken ill."

The various aspects and incidents of prairie scenery and life are presented with great felicity of description. The following passages will be read with interest. They had met a party of trappers belonging to the American Fur Company.

Among them, I had found an old companion on the northern prairie, a hardened and hardly served

veteran of the mountains, who had been as much hacked and scarred as an old *moustache* of Napoleon's "old guard." He flourished in the sobriquet of La Tulipe; his real name I never knew. Finding that he was going to the States only because his company was bound in that direction, and that he was rather more willing to return with me, I took him again into my service.

La Tulipe, graphically described by Fremont in the foregoing extract, belonged to a class of men who add much to the romantic interest of the great interior wilds of our continent. The sailors of the prairie, their only home is on those mighty wastes, their life is spent in wandering from point to point, their eyes delight in the boundless landscape, their hearts in scenes of peril and adventure. They are as completely severed from the ties of locality, and the restraints of ordinary life, as the sailor; they are as familiar with physical suffering, and with exposure to storm and death, as frée from care, and as brave, generous, and noble-hearted.

"At our evening camp, about sunset, three figures were discovered approaching, which our glasses made out to be Indians. They proved to be Cheyennes—two men, and a boy of thirteen. About a month since, they had left their people on the south fork of the river, some three hundred miles to the westward, and a party of only four in number had been to the Pawnee villages on a horse-stealing excursion, from which they were returning unsuccessful. They were miserably mounted on wild horses from the Arkansas plains, and had no other weapons

than bows and long spears; and had they been discovered by the Pawnees, could not, by any possibility, have escaped. They were mortified by their ill-success, and said the Pawnees were cowards, who shut up their horses in their lodges at night. I invited them to supper with me, and Randolph and the young Cheyenne, who had been eyeing each other suspiciously and curiously, soon became intimate friends.

"A few miles brought us into the midst of the buffalo, swarming in immense numbers over the plains, where they had left scarcely a blade of grass standing. Mr. Preuss, who was sketching at a little distance in the rear, had at first noted them as large groves of timber. In the sight of such a mass of life, the traveller feels a strange emotion of grandeur. We had heard from a distance a dull and confused murmuring, and, when we came in view of their dark masses, there was not one among us who did not feel his heart beat quicker. It was the early part of the day, when the herds are feeding; and everywhere they were in motion. Here and there a huge old bull was rolling in the grass, and clouds of dust rose in the air from various parts of the bands, each the scene of some obstinate fight. Indians and buffalo make the poetry and life of the prairie, and our camp was full of their exhilaration. With pleasant weather and no enemy to fear, and abundance of the most excellent meat, and no scarcity of bread or tobacco, they were enjoying the oasis of a voyageur's life. Three cows were killed to-day. Kit Carson had shot one, and was continuing the chase in the

midst of another herd, when his horse fell headlong, but sprang up and joined the flying band. Though considerably hurt, he had the good fortune to break no bones; and Maxwell, who was mounted on a fleet hunter, captured the runaway after a hard chase. He was on the point of shooting him, to avoid the loss of his bridle, (a handsomely mounted Spanish one,) when he found that his horse was able to come up with him. Animals are frequently lost in this way; and it is necessary to keep close watch over them, in the vicinity of the buffalo, in the midst of which they scour off to the plains and are rarely retaken. Astronomical observations placed us in longitude 100° 05′ 47″, latitude 40° 49′ 55″.

"July 1. As we were riding quietly along the bank, a grand herd of buffalo, some seven or eight hundred in number, came crowding up from the river, where they had been to drink, and commenced crossing the plain slowly, eating as they went. The wind was favorable; the coolness of the morning invited to exercise; the ground was apparently good, and the distance across the prairie (two or three miles) gave us a fine opportunity to charge them before they could get among the river hills. It was too fine a prospect for a chase to be lost; and, halting for a few moments, the hunters were brought up and saddled, and Kit Carson, Maxwell, and I started together. They were now somewhat less than half a mile distant, and we rode easily along until within about three hundred yards, when a sudden agitation, a wavering in the band, and a galloping to and fro of some which were scattered along the skirts, gave

us the intimation that we were discovered. We started together at a hand gallop, riding steadily abreast of each other, and here the interest of the chase became so engrossingly intense, that we were sensible to nothing else. We were now closing upon them rapidly, and the front of the mass was already in rapid motion for the hills, and in a few seconds the movement had communicated itself to the whole herd.

"A crowd of bulls, as usual, brought up the rear, and every now and then some of them faced about, and then dashed on after the band a short distance, and turned and looked again, as if more than half inclined to stand and fight. In a few moments, however, during which we had been quickening our pace, the rout was universal, and we were going over the ground like a hurricane. When at about thirty yards, we gave the usual shout, (the hunter's battle-cry,) and broke into the herd. We entered on the side, the mass giving way in every direction in their heedless course. Many of the bulls, less active and less fleet than the cows, paying no attention to the ground, and occupied solely with the hunter, were precipitated to the earth with great force, rolling over and over with the violence of the shock, and hardly distinguishable in the dust. We separated on entering, each singling out his game.

"My horse was a trained hunter, famous in the west under the name of "Proveau," and, with his eyes flashing, and the foam flying from his mouth, sprang on after the cow like a tiger. In a few moments he brought me alongside of her, and, rising

in the stirrups, I fired at the distance of a yard, the ball entering at the termination of the long hair, and passing near the heart. She fell headlong at the report of the gun, and checking my horse, I looked around for my companions. At a little distance, Kit was on the ground, engaged in tying his horse to the horns of a cow which he was preparing to cut up. Among the scattered bands, at some distance below, I caught a glimpse of Maxwell; and while I was looking, a light wreath of white smoke curled away from his gun, from which I was too far to hear the report. Nearer, and between me and the hills, towards which they were directing their course, was the body of the herd, and giving my horse the rein, we dashed after them. A thick cloud of dust hung upon their rear, which filled my mouth and eyes, and nearly smothered me. In the midst of this I could see nothing, and the buffalo were not distinguishable until within thirty feet. They crowded together more densely still as I came upon them, and rushed along in such a compact body, that I could not obtain an entrance,—the horse almost leaping upon them. In a few moments the mass divided to the right and left, the horns clattering with a noise heard above everything else, and my horse darted into the opening. Five or six bulls charged on us as we dashed along the line, but were left far behind, and singling out a cow, I gave her my fire, but struck too high. She gave a tremendous leap, and scoured on swifter than before. I reined up my horse, and the band swept on like a torrent, and left the place quiet and clear. Our chase had led us into dangerous ground.

A prairie-dog village, so thickly settled that there were three or four holes in every twenty yards square, occupied the whole bottom for nearly two miles in length. Looking around, I saw only one of the hunters, nearly out of sight, and the long dark line of our caravan crawling along, three or four miles distant."

The expedition had now reached the heart of the prairie country, and the report contains graphic descriptions of the scenery and general features of the landscape. The botanical richness of these vast plains is one of their most striking attractions.

As they approached the regions where danger from Indian hostility was to be apprehended, the men were practised, during the noon and evening halts, at target-shooting, and increased vigilance was exercised by the guards.

"We had travelled thirty-one miles. A heavy bank of black clouds in the west came on us in a storm between nine and ten, preceded by a violent wind. The rain fell in such torrents that it was difficult to breathe facing the wind, the thunder rolled incessantly, and the whole sky was tremulous with lightning; now and then illuminated by a blinding flash, succeeded by pitchy darkness. Carson had the watch from ten to midnight, and to him had been assigned our young *compagnons de voyage*, Messrs. Brant and R. Benton. This was their first night on guard, and such an introduction did not augur very auspiciously for the pleasures of the expedition. Many things conspired to render their situation uncomfortable; stories of desperate and bloody Indian fights were

rife in the camp; our position was badly chosen, surrounded on all sides by timbered hollows, and occupying an area of several hundred feet, so that necessarily the guards were far apart; and now and then I could hear Randolph, as if relieved by the sound of a voice in the darkness, calling out to the sergeant of the guard, to direct his attention to some imaginary alarm; but they stood it out, and took their turn regularly afterward."

The incidents of camp and prairie life are pleasantly told in the following passages:—

"As we were riding slowly along this afternoon, clouds of dust in the ravines, among the hills to the right, suddenly attracted our attention, and in a few minutes column after column of buffalo came galloping down, making directly to the river. By the time the leading herds had reached the water, the prairie was darkened with the dense masses. This movement of the buffalo indicated to us the presence of Indians on the North fork.

"I halted earlier than usual, about forty miles from the junction, and all hands were soon busily engaged in preparing a feast to celebrate the day. The kindness of our friends at St. Louis had provided us with a large supply of excellent preserves and rich fruit-cake; and when these were added to a macaroni soup, and variously prepared dishes of the choicest buffalo meat, crowned with a cup of coffee, and enjoyed with prairie appetite, we felt, as we sat in barbaric luxury around our smoking supper on the grass, a greater sensation of enjoyment than the Roman epicure at his perfumed feast. But most of

all it seemed to please our Indian friends, who, in the unrestrained enjoyment of the moment, demanded to know if our 'medicine days came often.'"

The route of the expedition had been along the southern side of the Kansas about one hundred miles, then across that river; after continuing some time near its northern side, across the country to Grand Island, in the Platte, then along the course of that river to the junction of its north and south forks, and then up the south fork.

At the distance of about forty miles from the junction, on the 5th of July, Mr. Fremont divided his party. With Mr. Preuss, Maxwell, Bernier, Ayot, and Basil Lajeunesse, he continued up the course of the south fork, taking with him the Cheyennes, as their home was in that direction. The residue of the party was placed under the command of Clement Lambert, who was directed to cross over to the north fork, and at some convenient place, make a *cache* of everything not absolutely necessary to the further progress of the expedition. It is the custom of parties travelling far into the wilderness, at points which they expect to pass again on their route, to conceal, by burying, or in any way covering, so as to protect and preserve them, such articles as may be dispensed with in the meantime. These places of hidden deposit are called *caches*. After attending to this, Lambert was instructed to make his way to the American company's fort at the mouth of Laramie's Fork, and there wait the arrival of Fremont, who designed to reach the fort in season to observe certain occultations that were to take place on the nights of the 16th and 17th of July.

"July 5. Before breakfast all was ready. We had one led horse in addition to those we rode, and a pack mule, destined to carry our instruments, provisions, and baggage; the last two articles not being of very great weight. The instruments consisted of a sextant, artificial horizon, &c., a barometer, spy-glass, and compass. The chronometer I of course kept on my person. I had ordered the cook to put up for us some flour, coffee, and sugar, and our rifles were to furnish the rest. One blanket, in addition to his saddle and saddle blanket, furnished the materials for each man's bed, and every one was provided with a change of linen. All were armed with rifles or double-barrelled guns; and, in addition to these, Maxwell and myself were furnished with excellent pistols. Thus accoutred, we took a parting breakfast with our friends, and set forth.

"Our journey the first day afforded nothing of any interest, though we had travelled about thirty-six miles.

"July 6. Finding that our present excursion would be attended with considerable hardship, and unwilling to expose more persons than necessary, I determined to send Mr. Preuss back to the party. His horse, too, appeared in no condition to support the journey; and accordingly, after breakfast, he took the road across the hills, attended by one of our most trusty men, Bernier. The ridge between the rivers is here about fifteen miles broad, and I expected he would probably strike the fork near their evening camp. At all events, he would not fail to find their trail, and rejoin them the next day."

After his people had composed themselves for the night, and silence and slumber had fallen upon the camp, it was the invariable practice of the commander, when the condition of the atmosphere, the state of the weather, and the aspect of the heavens allowed, to get out his instruments, take astronomical observations, and determine and record the latitude and longitude.

"My companions slept rolled up in their blankets, and the Indians lay in the grass near the fire; but my sleeping-place generally had an air of more pretension. Our rifles were tied together near the muzzle, the butts resting on the ground, and a knife laid on the rope, to cut away in case of an alarm. Over this, which made a kind of frame, was thrown a large India rubber cloth, which we used to cover our packs. This made a tent sufficiently large to receive about half of my bed, and was a place of shelter for my instruments; and as I was careful always to put this part against the wind, I could lie here with a sensation of satisfied enjoyment, and hear the wind blow, and the rain patter close to my head, and know that I should be at least half dry. Certainly, I never slept more soundly. The barometer at sunset was 26.010, thermometer 81°, and cloudy; but a gale from the west sprang up with the setting sun, and in a few minutes swept away every cloud from the sky. The evening was very fine, and I remained up to take some astronomical observations."

The party ascended the South Fork, arriving, late in the evening of the 10th, at St. Vrain's Fort, which is at the foot of the mountains, about seventeen miles

from Long's Peak. On the morning of the 12th, it started across the country in the direction of Fort Laramie, which was reached by the evening of the 15th. They passed on the way some of those wonderful natural formations which the face of the rocks and outlines of the mountains often present in the interior of the continent.

"The hill on the western side imitates, in an extraordinary manner, a massive fortified place, with a remarkable fulness of detail. The rock is marl and earthy limestone, white, without the least appearance of vegetation, and much resembles masonry at a little distance; and here it sweeps around a level area two or three hundred yards in diameter, and in the form of a half-moon, terminating on either extremity in enormous bastions. Along the whole line of the parapets appear domes and slender minarets, forty or fifty feet high, giving it every appearance of an old fortified town. On the waters of White River, where this formation exists in great extent, it presents appearances which excite the admiration of the solitary voyageur, and form a frequent theme of their conversation when speaking of the wonders of the country. Sometimes it offers the perfectly illusive appearance of a large city, with numerous streets and magnificent buildings, among which the Canadians never fail to see their *cabaret;* and sometimes it takes the form of a solitary house, with many large chambers, into which they drive their horses at night, and sleep in these natural defences perfectly secure from any attack of prowling savages. Before reaching our camp at Goshen's Hole, in crossing the immense

detritus at the foot of the Castle Rock, we were involved amidst winding passages cut by the waters of the hill; and where, with a breadth scarcely large enough for the passage of a horse, the walls rise thirty and forty feet perpendicularly. This formation supplies the discoloration of the Platte."

Upon reaching Fort Laramie, Fremont found the residue of his party there. They had arrived on the evening of the 13th. Mr. Preuss, with his companion Bernier, had intercepted them at the expected point. Some extracts from Preuss's journal will be read with interest, and prepare the mind to appreciate the energy and decision of character of Fremont, and the heroic fidelity of those of his followers who resolved to share with him the now imminent dangers and increasing hardships of the enterprise.

It seems that after leaving Fremont, on the 6th of July, Preuss and Bernier reached the north fork of the Platte, in about six hours. There was no sign that Lambert's party had passed. Bernier rode down along the river to find them, leaving Preuss, who was too much exhausted to accompany him. The night approached and Bernier did not return. Of course there is always more or less danger in those vast unknown regions when parties get separated and out of sight, and where all are liable to be suddenly cut off, of not meeting again.

Under date of July 8, Preuss relates as follows:—

"Our road to-day was a solitary one. No game made its appearance—not even a buffalo or a stray antelope; and nothing occurred to break the monotony until about five o'clock, when the caravan made

a sudden halt. There was a galloping in of scouts and horsemen from every side—a hurrying to and fro in noisy confusion; rifles were taken from their cover; bullet pouches examined; in short, there was the cry of 'Indians' heard again. I had become so much accustomed to these alarms, that now they made but little impression on me; and before I had time to become excited, the newcomers were ascertained to be whites. It was a large party of traders and trappers, conducted by Mr. Bridger, a man well known in the history of the country. As the sun was low, and there was a fine grass patch not far ahead, they turned back and encamped for the night with us. Mr. Bridger was invited to supper; and we listened with eager interest to an account of their adventures. What they had met, we would be likely to encounter; the chances which had befallen them, would probably happen to us; we looked upon their life as a picture of our own. He informed us that the condition of the country had become exceedingly dangerous. The Sioux, who had been badly disposed, had broken out into open hostility, and in the preceding autumn his party had encountered them in a severe engagement, in which a number of lives had been lost on both sides. United with the Cheyenne and Gros Ventre Indians, they were scouring the upper country in war parties of great force, and were at this time in the neighborhood of the *Red Buttes*, a famous landmark, which was directly on our path. They had declared war upon every living thing which should be found westward of that point, though their main object was to attack a large camp

of whites and Snake Indians, who had a rendezvous in the Sweetwater Valley. Availing himself of his intimate knowledge of the country, he had reached Laramie by an unusual route through the Black Hills, and avoided coming into contact with any of the scattered parties. This gentleman offered his services to accompany us so far as the head of the Sweetwater; but the absence of our leader, which was deeply regretted by us all, rendered it impossible for us to enter upon such arrangement. In a camp consisting of men whose lives had been spent in this country, I expected to find every one prepared for occurrences of this nature; but, to my great surprise, I found, on the contrary, that this news had thrown them all into the greatest consternation, and on every side I heard only one exclamation, '*Il n'y aura pas de vie pour nous,*'—'There will be no more life for us,' 'our days are numbered.' All the night, scattered groups were assembled around the fires, smoking their pipes, and listening with the greatest eagerness to exaggerated details of Indian hostilities; and in the morning I found the camp dispirited, and agitated by a variety of conflicting opinions. A majority of the people were strongly disposed to return; but Clement Lambert, with some five or six others, professed their determination to follow Mr. Fremont to the uttermost limit of his journey. The others yielded to their remonstrances, and, somewhat ashamed of their cowardice, concluded to advance at least so far as Laramie Fork, eastward of which they were aware no danger was to be apprehended."

Upon Fremont's reaching the fort, a variety of circumstances, related to him by Mr. Boudeau, the gentleman in charge of that station—corroborated by the testimony of all who had means of knowledge —confirmed the alarming statements made by Mr. Bridger. Extracts from Fremont's Journal will enable the reader to realize the pressure made upon him at Fort Laramie to prevent the further prosecution of his journey:—

"Thus it would appear that the country was swarming with scattered war parties; and when I heard, during the day, the various contradictory and exaggerated rumors which were incessantly repeated to them, I was not surprised that so much alarm prevailed among my men. Carson, one of the best and most experienced mountaineers, fully supported the opinion given by Bridger of the dangerous state of the country, and openly expressed his conviction that we could not escape without some sharp encounters with the Indians. In addition to this, he made his will; and among the circumstances which were constantly occurring to increase their alarm, this was the most unfortunate; and I found that a number of my party had become so much intimidated that they had requested to be discharged at this place.

"So far as frequent interruption from the Indians would allow, we occupied ourselves in making some astronomical calculations, and bringing up the general map to this stage of our journey; but the tent was generally occupied by a succession of our ceremonious visitors. Some came for presents, and oth-

ers for information of our object in coming to the country; now and then, one would dart up to the tent on horseback, jerk off his trappings and stand silent at the door, holding his horse by the halter, signifying his desire to trade; occasionally, a savage would stalk in with an invitation to a feast of honor, a dog feast, and deliberately sit down and wait quietly until I was ready to accompany him. I went to one; the women and children were sitting outside the lodge, and we took our seats on buffalo robes spread around. The dog was in a large pot over the fire, in the middle of the lodge, and immediately on our arrival was dished up in large wooden bowls, one of which was handed to each. The flesh appeared very glutinous, with something of the flavor and appearance of mutton.

" During our stay here, the men had been engaged in making numerous repairs, arranging pack-saddles, and otherwise preparing for the chances of a rough road and mountain travel. All things of this nature being ready, I gathered them around me in the evening, and told them that ' I had determined to proceed the next day. They were all well-armed. I had engaged the services of Mr. Bissonette as interpreter, and had taken, in the circumstances, every possible means to insure our safety. In the rumors we had heard, I believed there was much exaggeration; and then, they were men accustomed to this kind of life and to the country; and that these were the dangers of every day occurrence, and to be expected in the ordinary course of their service. They had heard of the unsettled condition of the country

before leaving St. Louis, and therefore could not make it a reason for breaking their engagements. Still, I was unwilling to take with me, on a service of some certain danger, men on whom I could not rely; and as I had understood that there were among them some who were disposed to cowardice, and anxious to return, they had but to come forward at once, and state their desire, and they would be discharged with the amount due to them for the time they had served.' To their honor be it said, there was but one among them who had the face to come forward and avail himself of the permission. I did not think that the situation of the country justified me in taking our young companions, Messrs. Brant and Benton, along with us. In case of misfortune, it would have been thought, at the least, an act of great imprudence; and therefore, though reluctantly, I determined to leave them. Randolph had been the life of the camp, and the *petit garcon* was much regretted by the men, to whom his buoyant spirits had afforded great amusement. They all, however, agreed in the propriety of leaving him at the fort, because, as they said, he might cost the lives of some of the men in a fight with the Indians.

"We were ready to depart; the tents were struck, the mules geared up, and our horses saddled, and we walked up to the fort to take the *stirrup-cup* with our friends in an excellent home-brewed preparation. While thus pleasantly engaged, seated in one of the little cool chambers, at the door of which a man had been stationed to prevent all intrusion from the Indians, a number of chiefs, several of them powerful,

fine-looking men, forced their way into the room in spite of all opposition. Handing me the following letter, they took their seats in silence:—

'Fort Platte, July 1, 1842.

'Mr. Fremont: The Chiefs having assembled in council have just told me to warn you not to set out before the party of young men which is now out shall have returned. Furthermore, they tell me that they are very sure they will fire upon you as soon as they meet you. They are expected back in seven or eight days. Excuse me for making these observations, but it seems my duty to warn you of danger. Moreover, the chiefs who prohibit your setting out before the return of the warriors are the bearers of this note.

'I am your obedient servant,

'Joseph Bissonette,
'By L. B. Chartrain.

'*Names of some of the chiefs.* The Otter Hat, the Breaker of Arrows, the Black Night, the Bull's Tail.'

"After reading this, I mentioned its purport to my companions; and, seeing that all were fully possessed of its contents, one of the Indians rose, and having first shaken hands with me, spoke as follows:—

'You have come among us at a bad time. Some of our people have been killed, and our young men, who are gone to the mountains, are eager to avenge

the blood of their relations, which has been shed by the whites. Our young men are bad, and, if they meet you, they will believe that you are carrying goods and ammunition to their enemies, and will fire upon you. You have told us that this will make war. We know that our great father has many soldiers and big guns, and we are anxious to have our lives. We love the whites, and are desirous of peace. Thinking of all these things, we have determined to keep you here until our warriors return. We are glad to see you among us. Our father is rich, and we expected that you would have brought presents to us—horses, and guns, and blankets. But we are glad to see you. We look upon your coming as the light which goes before the sun; for you will tell our great father that you have seen us, and that we are naked and poor, and have nothing to eat; and he will send us all these things.' He was followed by the others to the same effect.

"The observations of the savage appeared reasonable; but I was aware that they had in view only the present object of detaining me, and were unwilling I should go further into the country. In reply, I asked them, through the interpreter, Mr. Boudeau, to select two or three of their number to accompany us until we should meet their people—they should spread their robes in my tent and eat at my table, and on our return I would give them presents in reward of their services. They declined, saying that there were no young men left in the village, and that they were too old to travel so many days on horseback, and preferred now to smoke their pipes in the

lodge, and let the warriors go on the war-path. Besides, they had no power over the young men, and were afraid to interfere with them. In my turn I addressed them: 'You say that you love the whites; why have you killed so many already this Spring? You say that you love the whites, and are full of many expressions of friendship to us; but you are not willing to undergo the fatigue of a few days' ride to save our lives. We do not believe what you have said, and will not listen to you. Whatever a chief among us tells his soldiers to do, is done. We are the soldiers of the great chief, your father. He has told us to come here and see this country, and all the Indians, his children. Why should we not go? Before we came, we heard that you had killed his people, and ceased to be his children; but we came among you peaceably, holding out our hands. Now we find that the stories we heard are not lies, and that you are no longer his friends and children. *We have thrown away our bodies, and will not turn back.* When you told us that your young men would kill us, you did not know that our hearts were strong, and you did not see the rifles which my young men carry in their hands. We are few, and you are many, and may kill us all; but there will be much crying in your villages, for many of your young men will stay behind, and forget to return with your warriors from the mountains. Do you think that our great chief will let his soldiers die, and forget to cover their graves? Before the snows melt again, his warriors will sweep away your villages as the fire does the prairie in the autumn.

See! I have pulled down my *white houses*, and my people are ready; when the sun is ten paces higher, we shall be on the march. If you have anything to tell us, you will say it soon.' I broke up the conference, as I could do nothing with these people; and, being resolved to proceed, nothing was to be gained by delay. Accompanied by our hospitable friends, we returned to the camp. We had mounted our horses, and our parting salutations had been exchanged, when one of the chiefs (the Bull's Tail) arrived to tell me that they had determined to send a young man with us; and if I would point out the place of our evening camp, he should join us there. 'The young man is poor,' said he; 'he has no horse, and expects you to give him one.' I described to him the place where I intended to encamp, and, shaking hands, in a few minutes we were among the hills, and this last habitation of whites shut out from our view."

The intrepid resolution evinced by Fremont on this occasion is truly remarkable. He was a young man, and life had charms and ties as strong as ever could have appealed, in any heart, to the motives of self-preservation. A fond wife, and a dependent and devoted mother, were anxiously awaiting his safe return. There was ample justification, had he concluded to return. Indians, traders, hunters, his own people, even the stoutest of them all, conspired with one voice to implore him not to expose him and them to what they regarded as all but certain death. It is, indeed, hard to tell upon what principles, or by what processes of reasoning, he was led to his

inflexible determination. Like many other instances in his history, it illustrates an extraordinary sagacity and firmness of mind. He often exhibited similar daring, and was always justified by the result. The decision at Fort Laramie was the turning-point in his destiny. If he had yielded to the fears that had overcome all other minds, failure would have been stamped upon him forever. But as it was, he won the glory of inflexible and invincible resolution in the hearts of his admiring followers, and gave to the savages and all others who dealt with him an impression they ever after retained, that he was indeed a BRAVE, and that nothing could prevent his accomplishing whatever he undertook.

At Fort Laramie, an Indian lodge, about eighteen feet in diameter, and twenty in height, was procured in place of the tents, which had been found too thin to protect the instruments from the penetrating rains, or to withstand the violent winds prevalent in that region. These lodges constitute a warm and dry shelter in cold and storms, and are so constructed as to allow the lower part of the sides to be lifted up, permitting the breeze to pass freely through them in warm weather. They are particularly comfortable, then, as mosquitoes are never known to enter them. At the encampment, on the close of the first day's march, while the men were busily attempting to put up the lodge, Mr. Bissonette, a trader resident at Fort Laramie, who had agreed to accompany the party to a limited point, overtook them. The Indian who had been engaged as a guide, accompanied by his wife, came in with

Mr. Bissonette. Upon seeing the men engaged in their unaccustomed work, attempting to put up the lodge, she laughed heartily at their awkwardness, at once took hold herself, and pitched it with an expertness which it was some time before they learned to equal.

The point where the Platte leaves the Black Hills presents a most remarkable and beautiful scene. The breadth of the stream, generally occupying nearly the whole width of the chasm through which it flows, is from two to three hundred feet. The wall on each side is of perpendicular rock, sometimes even overhanging, of a bright red color, from two to four hundred feet high, crowned with green summits, fringed with occasional pines. The river flows through with a swift stream of perfectly clear water, occasionally broken into rapids.

"July 28. We continued our way, and four miles beyond the ford Indians were discovered again; and I halted while a party was sent forward to ascertain who they were. In a short time they returned, accompanied by a number of Indians of the Oglallah band of Sioux. They gave us a very discouraging picture of the country. The great drought and the plague of grasshoppers had swept it so that scarce a blade of grass was to be seen, and there was not a buffalo to be found in the whole region. Their people, they further said, had been nearly starved to death, and we would find their road marked by lodges which they had thrown away in order to move more rapidly, and by the carcasses of the horses which they had eaten, or which had perished by starvation. Such was the prospect before us.

"When he had finished the interpretation of these things, Mr. Bissonette immediately rode up to me, and urgently advised that I should entirely abandon the further prosecution of my exploration. 'The best advice I can give you, is to turn back at once.' It was his own intention to return, as we had now reached the point to which he had engaged to attend me. In reply I called up my men, and communicated to them fully the information I had just received. I then expressed to them my fixed determination to proceed to the end of the enterprise on which I had been sent; but as the situation of the country gave me some reason to apprehend that it might be attended with an unfortunate result to some of us, I would leave it optional with them to continue with me or to return.

"Among them were some five or six who I knew would remain. We had still ten days' provisions; and, should no game be found, when this stock was expended, we had our horses and mules, which we could eat when other means of subsistence failed. But not a man flinched from the undertaking. 'We'll eat the mules,' said Basil Lajeunesse; and thereupon we shook hands with our interpreter and his Indians, and parted. With them I sent back one of my men, Dumés, whom the effects of an old wound in the leg rendered incapable of continuing the journey on foot, and his horse seemed on the point of giving out. Having resolved to disencumber ourselves immediately of everything not absolutely necessary to our future operations, I turned directly in toward the river, and encamped on the left bank, a little

above the place where our council had been held, and where a thick grove of willows offered a suitable spot for the object I had in view.

"The carts having been discharged, the covers and wheels were taken off, and, with the frames, carried into some low places among the willows, and concealed in the dense foliage in such a manner that the glitter of the iron work might not attract the observation of some straggling Indian. In the sand, which had been blown up into waves among the willows, a large hole was then dug, ten feet square and six deep. In the meantime, all our effects had been spread out upon the ground, and whatever was designed to be carried along with us separated and laid aside, and the remaining part carried to the hole and carefully covered up. As much as possible, all traces of our proceedings were obliterated, and it wanted but a rain to render our *cache* safe beyond discovery. All the men were now set at work to arrange the pack-saddles and make up the packs."

On the return of the party, a month afterwards, this *cache* was found unmolested.

Following up the Platte, they passed the lofty escarpments of red argillaceous sandstone, called the Red Buttes. The Hot Spring Gate is about four hundred yards in length. The river flows through with a quiet and even current. On each side is a smooth green shelf of prairie. The walls are of white sandstone, rise perpendicularly, and are about seventy yards apart. The height of the lower one of the two was found to be three hundred and sixty feet.

On the 31st of July they left the Platte, and crossed to the Sweetwater River. The next day they reached the vicinity of Rock Independence, an isolated mass of granite, about six hundred and fifty yards long, and forty high. A few miles further is the Devil's Gate. The length of the passage is about three hundred yards, and its width thirty-five yards. The walls are vertical, of granite, about four hundred feet in height. On the 8th of August they entered the SOUTH PASS.

"About six miles from our encampment brought us to the summit. The ascent had been so gradual, that, with all the intimate knowledge possessed by Carson, who had made this country his home for seventeen years, we were obliged to watch very closely to find the place at which we had reached the culminating point. This was between two low hills, rising on either hand fifty or sixty feet. When I looked back at them, from the foot of the immediate slope on the western plain, their summits appeared to be about one hundred and twenty feet above. From the impression on my mind at this time, and subsequently on our return, I should compare the elevation which we surmounted immediately at the Pass, to the ascent of the Capitol hill from the avenue at Washington. It is difficult for me to fix positively the breadth of this pass. From the broken ground where it commences, at the foot of the Wind River chain, the view to the southeast is over a champaign country, broken, at the distance of nineteen miles, by the Table Rock; which, with the other isolated hills in its vicinity, seems to stand on a comparative plain.

This I judged to be its termination, the ridge recovering its rugged character with the Table Rock. It will be seen that it in no manner resembles the places to which the term is commonly applied; nothing of the gorge-like character and winding ascents of the Alleghany passes in America; nothing of the Great St. Bernard and Simplon passes in Europe. Approaching it from the mouth of the Sweetwater, a sandy plain, one hundred and twenty miles long, conducts by a gradual and regular ascent, to the summit, about seven thousand feet above the sea; and the traveller, without being reminded of any change by toilsome ascents, suddenly finds himself on the waters which flow to the Pacific Ocean. By the route we had travelled, the distance from Fort Laramie is three hundred and twenty miles, or nine hundred and fifty from the mouth of the Kansas."

From the South Pass, the route continued behind, or to the westward of the Wind River Mountains, among the head streams of the Colorado. But here Fremont must be allowed to tell his own story:—

"August 10. The air at sunrise is clear and pure, and the morning extremely cold, but beautiful. A little before sunrise the thermometer was at 35°, and at sunrise 33°. Water froze last night, and fires are very comfortable. The scenery becomes hourly more interesting and grand, and the view here is magnificent; but, indeed, it needs something to repay the long prairie journey of a thousand miles. We were now approaching the loftiest part of the Wind River chain; and I left the valley a few miles from our encampment, intending to penetrate the moun-

tains as far as possible with the whole party. We were soon involved in very broken ground, among long ridges covered with fragments of granite. Winding our way up a long ravine, we came unexpectedly in view of a most beautiful lake, set like a gem in the mountains. The sheet of water lay transversely across the direction we had been pursuing; and, descending the steep, rocky ridge, where it was necessary to lead our horses, we followed its banks to the southern extremity. Here a view of the utmost magnificence and grandeur burst upon our eyes. With nothing between us and their feet to lessen the effect of the whole height, a grand bed of snow-capped mountains rose before us, pile upon pile, glowing in the bright light of an August day. Immediately below them lay the lake, between two ridges, covered with dark pines, which swept down from the main chain to the spot where we stood. Here we set about our preparations for ascending the mountains. I was desirous to keep strictly within the scope of my instructions; and it would have required ten or fifteen additional days for the accomplishment of this object; our animals had become very much worn out with the length of the journey; game was very scarce; and, though it does not appear in the course of the narrative, (as I have avoided dwelling upon trifling incidents not connected with the objects of the expedition,) the spirits of the men had been much exhausted by the hardships and privations to which they had been subjected. Our provisions had wellnigh all disappeared. Bread had been long out of the question;

and of all our stock, we had remaining two or three pounds of coffee, and a small quantity of macaroni, which had been husbanded with great care for the mountain expedition we were about to undertake. Our daily meal consisted of dry buffalo meat, cooked in tallow; and, as we had not dried this with Indian skill, part of it was spoiled; and what remained of good, was as hard as wood, having much the taste and appearance of so many pieces of bark. Even of this, our stock was rapidly diminishing in a camp which was capable of consuming two buffaloes in every twenty-four hours. These animals had entirely disappeared; and it was not probable that we should fall in with them again until we returned to the Sweetwater.

"Our arrangements for the ascent were rapidly completed. We were in a hostile country, which rendered the greatest vigilance and circumspection necessary. The pass at the north end of the mountain was generally infested by Blackfeet; and immediately opposite was one of their forts, on the edge of a little thicket, two or three hundred feet from our encampment. We were posted in a grove of beech, on the margin of the lake, and a few hundred feet long, with a narrow *prairillon* on the inner side, bordered by the rocky ridge. In the upper end of this grove we cleared a circular space about forty feet in diameter, and with the felled timber and interwoven branches, surounded it with a breastwork five feet in height. A gap was left for a gate on the inner side, by which the animals were to be driven in and secured, while the men slept around the little

work. It was half hidden by the foliage; and, garrisoned by twelve resolute men, would have set at defiance any band of savages which might chance to discover them in the interval of our absence. Fifteen of the best mules, with fourteen men, were selected for the mountain party. Our provisions consisted of dried meat for two days, with our little stock of coffee and some macaroni. In addition to the barometer and a thermometer, I took with me a sextant and spy-glass, and we had, of course, our compasses. In charge of the camp I left Bernier, one of my most trustworthy men, who possessed the most determined courage.

"August 12. Early in the morning we left the camp, fifteen in number, well-armed, of course, and mounted on our best mules. A pack animal carried our provisions, with a coffee-pot and kettle, and three or four tin cups. Every man had a blanket strapped over his saddle, to serve for his bed, and the instruments were carried by turns on their backs. We entered directly on rough and rocky ground; and just after crossing the ridge, had the good fortune to shoot an antelope. We heard the roar, and had a glimpse of a waterfall as we rode along; and, crossing in our way two fine streams, tributary to the Colorado, in about two hours' ride we reached the top of the first row or range of the mountains. Here, again, a view of the most romantic beauty met our eyes. It seemed as if, from the vast expanse of uninteresting prairie we had passed over, Nature had collected all her beauties together in one chosen place. We were overlooking a deep valley, which

was entirely occupied by three lakes, and from the brink the surrounding ridges rose precipitously five hundred and a thousand feet, covered with the dark green of the balsam pine, relieved on the border of the lake with the light foliage of the aspen. They all communicated with each other; and the green of the waters, common to mountain lakes of great depth, showed that it would be impossible to cross them. The surprise manifested by our guides when these impassable obstacles suddenly barred our progress, proved that they were among the hidden treasures of the place, unknown even to the wandering trappers of the region. Descending the hill, we proceeded to make our way along the margin to the southern extremity. A narrow strip of angular fragments of rocks sometimes afforded a rough pathway for our mules, but generally we rode along the shelving side, occasionally scrambling up, at a considerable risk of tumbling back into the lake.

"We had reached a very elevated point, and in the valley below, and among the hills, were a number of lakes at different levels; some, two or three hundred feet above others, with which they communicated by foaming torrents. Even to our great height, the roar of the cataracts came up, and we could see them leaping down in lines of snowy foam. From this scene of busy waters, we turned abruptly into the stillness of a forest, where we rode among the open bolls of the pines, over a lawn of verdant grass, having strikingly the air of cultivated grounds. This led us, after a time, among masses of rock which had no vegetable earth but in hollows

and crevices, though still the pine forest continued. Toward evening, we reached a defile, or rather a hole in the mountains, entirely shut in by dark pine-covered rocks.

"I determined to leave our animals here, and make the rest of our way on foot. The peak appeared so near that there was no doubt of our returning before night; and a few men were left in charge of the mules, with our provisions and blankets. We took with us nothing but our arms and instruments, and, as the day had become warm, the greater part left their coats. Having made an early dinner, we started again. We were soon involved in the most ragged precipices, nearing the central chain very slowly, and rising but little. The first ridge hid a succession of others; and when, with great fatigue and difficulty, we had climbed up five hundred feet, it was but to make an equal descent on the other side; all these intervening places were filled with small deep lakes, which met the eye in every direction, descending from one level to another, sometimes under bridges formed by huge fragments of granite, beneath which was heard the roar of the water. These constantly obstructed our path, forcing us to make long *détours;* frequently obliged to retrace our steps, and frequently falling among the rocks. Maxwell was precipitated toward the face of a precipice, and saved himself from going over by throwing himself flat on the ground. We clambered on, always expecting with every ridge that we crossed to reach the foot of the peaks, and always disappointed, until about four o'clock, when, pretty

well worn out, we reached the shore of a little lake in which there was a rocky island.

"By the time we had reached the further side of the lake, we found ourselves all exceedingly fatigued, and, much to the satisfaction of the whole party, we encamped. The spot we had chosen was a broad, flat rock, in some measure protected from the winds by the surrounding crags, and the trunks of fallen pines afforded us bright fires. Near by was a foaming torrent, which tumbled into the little lake about one hundred and fifty feet below us, and which, by way of distinction, we have called Island Lake. We had reached the upper limit of the piney region; as, above this point, no tree was to be seen, and patches of snow lay everywhere around us on the cold sides of the rocks. The flora of the region we had traversed since leaving our mules was extremely rich, and, among the characteristic plants, the scarlet flowers of the *dodecatheon dentatum* everywhere met the eye in great abundance. A small green ravine, on the edge of which we were encamped, was filled with a profusion of alpine plants in brilliant bloom.

"On every side as we advanced was heard the roar of waters and of a torrent which we followed up a short distance, until it expanded into a lake about one mile in length. On the northern side of the lake was a bank of ice, or rather of snow, covered with a crust of ice. Carson had been our guide into the mountains, and, agreeably to his advice, we left this little valley and took to the ridges again; which we found extremely broken, and where we

were again involved among precipices. Here were ice-fields; among which we were all dispersed, seeking each the best path to ascend the peak. Mr. Preuss attempted to walk along the upper edge of one of these fields, which sloped away at an angle of about twenty degrees; but his feet slipped from under him and he went plunging down the plane. A few hundred feet below, at the bottom, were some fragments of sharp rock on which he landed; and though he turned a couple of somersaults, fortunately received no injury beyond a few bruises. Two of the men, Clement Lambert and Descoteaux, had been taken ill, and lay down on the rocks a short distance below; and at this point I was attacked with headache and giddiness, accompanied by vomiting. Finding myself unable to proceed, I sent the barometer over to Mr. Preuss, who was in a gap two or three hundred yards distant, desiring him to reach the peak, if possible, and take an observation there. He found himself unable to proceed further in that direction, and took an observation, where the barometer stood at 19.401; attached thermometer 50°, in the gap. Carson, who had gone over to him, succeeded in reaching one of the snowy summits of the main ridge, whence he saw the peak towards which all our efforts had been directed, towering eight or ten hundred feet into the air above him. In the meantime, finding myself grow rather worse than better, and doubtful how far my strength would carry me, I sent Basil Lajeunesse, with four men, back to the place where the mules had been left.

"We were now better acquainted with the

topography of the country, and I directed him to bring back with him, if it were in any way possible, four or five mules, with provisions and blankets. With me were Maxwell and Ayer; and after we had remained nearly an hour on the rock, it became so unpleasantly cold, though the day was bright, that we set out on our return to the camp, at which we all arrived safely, straggling in one after the other. I continued ill during the afternoon, but became better towards sundown, when my recovery was completed by the appearance of Basil and four men, all mounted. The men who had gone with him had been too much fatigued to return, and were relieved by those in charge of the horses; but in his powers of endurance Basil resembled more a mountain goat than a man. They brought blankets and provisions, and we enjoyed well our dried meat and a cup of good coffee. We rolled ourselves up in our blankets, and, with our feet turned to a blazing fire, slept soundly until morning.

"August 15. It had been supposed that we had finished with the mountains; and the evening before it had been arranged that Carson should set out at daylight and return to breakfast at the Camp of the Mules, taking with him all but four or five men, who were to stay with me and bring back the mules and instruments. Accordingly, at the break of day they set out. With Mr. Preuss and myself remained Basil Lajeunesse, Clement Lambert, Janisse, and Descoteaux. When we had secured strength for the day by a hearty breakfast, we covered what remained, which was enough for one meal, with

rocks, in order that it might be safe from any marauding bird; and, saddling our mules, turned our faces once more towards the peaks. This time we determined to proceed quietly and cautiously, deliberately resolved to accomplish our object if it were within the compass of human means. We were of opinion that a long defile which lay to the left of yesterday's route would lead us to the foot of the main peak. Our mules had been refreshed by the fine grass in the little ravine at the Island camp, and we intended to ride up the defile as far as possible, in order to husband our strength for the main ascent. Though this was a fine passage, still, it was a defile of the most rugged mountains known, and we had many a rough and steep slippery place to cross before reaching the end. In this place the sun rarely shone; snow lay along the border of the small stream which flowed through it, and occasional icy passages made the footing of the mules very insecure, and the rocks and ground were moist with the trickling waters in this spring of mighty rivers. We soon had the satisfaction to find ourselves riding along the huge wall which forms the central summit of the chain. There at last it rose by our sides, a nearly perpendicular wall of granite, terminating 2,000 to 3,000 feet above our heads in a serrated line of broken, jagged cones. We rode on until we came almost immediately below the main peak, which I denominated the Snow Peak, as it exhibited more snow to the eye than any of the neighboring summits. Here were three small lakes of a green color, each of perhaps a thousand yards in diameter,

and apparently very deep. These lay in a kind of chasm; and, according to the barometer, we had attained but a few hundred feet above the Island lake. The barometer here stood at 20.450, attached thermometer 70°.

"We managed to get our mules up to a little bench about a hundred feet above the lakes, where there was a patch of good grass, and turned them loose to graze. During our rough ride to this place, they had exhibited a wonderful surefootedness. Parts of the defile were filled with angular, sharp fragments of rock, three or four and eight or ten feet cube; and among these they had worked their way, leaping from one narrow point to another, rarely making a false step, and giving us no occasion to dismount. Having divested ourselves of every unnecessary encumbrance, we commenced the ascent. This time, like experienced travellers, we did not press ourselves, but climbed leisurely, sitting down so soon as we found breath beginning to fail. At intervals, we reached places where a number of springs gushed from the rocks, and about 1,800 feet above the lakes came to the snow line. From this point our progress was uninterrupted climbing. Hitherto, I had worn a pair of thick moccasins, with soles of *parflêche;* but here I put on a light thin pair, which I had brought for the purpose, as now the use of our toes became necessary to a further advance. I availed myself of a sort of comb of the mountain, which stood against the wall like a buttress, and which the wind and the solar radiation, joined to the steepness of the smooth rock, had kept almost entire-

ly free from snow. Up this I made my way rapidly. Our cautious method of advancing in the outset had spared my strength; and, with the exception of a slight disposition to headache, I felt no remains of yesterday's illness. In a few minutes we reached a point where the buttress was overhanging, and there was no other way of surmounting the difficulty than by passing around one side of it, which was the face of a vertical precipice of several hundred feet.

"Around us, the whole scene had one main striking feature, which was that of terrible convulsion. Parallel to its length, the ridge was split into chasms and fissures, between which rose the thin, lofty walls, terminated with slender minarets and columns, which is correctly represented in the view from the camp on Island Lake. According to the barometer, the little crest of the wall on which we stood was three thousand five hundred and seventy feet above that place, and two thousand seven hundred and eighty above the little lakes at the bottom, immediately at our feet. Our camp at the Two Hills (an astronomical station) bore south 3° east, which, with a bearing afterward obtained from a fixed position, enabled us to locate the peak. The bearing of the *Trois Tetons* was north 50° west, and the direction of the central ridge of the Wind River Mountains south 39° east. The summit rock was gneiss, succeeded by sienitic gneiss. Sienite and feldspar succeeded in our descent to the snow line, where we found a feldspathic granite. I had remarked that the noise produced by the explosion of our pistols had the usual degree of loudness, but was not in the

least prolonged, expiring almost instantaneously. Having now made what observations our means afforded, we proceeded to descend. We had accomplished an object of laudable ambition, and beyond the strict order of our instructions. We had climbed the loftiest peak of the Rocky Mountains, and looked down upon the snow a thousand feet below, and, standing where never human foot had stood before, felt the exultation of first explorers. It was about two o'clock when we left the summit; and when we reached the bottom, the sun had already sunk behind the wall, and the day was drawing to a close. It would have been pleasant to have lingered here and on the summit longer; but we hurried away as rapidly as the ground would permit, for it was an object to regain our party as soon as possible, not knowing what accident the next hour might bring forth.

"We reached our deposit of provisions at nightfall. Here was not the inn which awaits the tired traveller on his return from Mont Blanc, or the orange groves of South America, with their refreshing juices and soft fragrant air; but we found our little *cache* of dried meat and coffee undisturbed. Though the moon was bright, the road was full of precipices, and the fatigue of the day had been great. We therefore abandoned the idea of rejoining our friends, and lay down on the rock, and, in spite of the cold, slept soundly.

"August 16. We left our encampment with the daylight. We saw on our way large flocks of mountain goat looking down on us from the cliffs. At the crack of a rifle they would bound off among the

rocks, and in a few minutes make their appearance on some lofty peak, a hundred or a thousand feet above. It is needless to attempt any further description of the country; the portion over which we travelled this morning was rough as imagination could picture it, and to us seemed equally beautiful. A concourse of lakes and rushing waters, mountains of rocks naked and destitute of vegetable earth, dells and ravines of the most exquisite beauty, all kept green and fresh by the great moisture in the air, and sown with brilliant flowers, and everywhere, thrown around all, the glory of the most magnificent scenes; these constitute the features of the place, and impress themselves vividly on the mind of the traveller. It was not until eleven o'clock that we reached the place where our animals had been left when we first attempted the mountains on foot. Near one of the still burning fires we found a piece of meat which our friends had thrown away and which furnished us a mouthful—a very scanty breakfast. We continued directly on and reached our camp on the mountain lake at dusk. We found all well. Nothing had occurred to interrupt the quiet since our departure, and the fine grass and good cool water had done much to re-establish our animals. All heard with great delight the order to turn our faces homeward; and toward sundown of the 17th, we encamped again at the Two Buttes."

The Peak which had thus been reached was found to be, by the barometer, thirteen thousand five hundred and seventy feet above the waters of the Gulf of Mexico, and is supposed to be the highest point of

the Rocky Mountains. On the north, within the range of the eye, were the snow-clad mountains that contain the sources of the Columbia and Missouri, on the west the innumerable lakes and streams that feed the Colorado of the Gulf of California, and on the east the springs of the Yellow Stone branch of the Missouri. On the south the headwaters of the Platte or Nebraska gush from their fountains, and not far beyond them are the original mountain reservoirs of the Arkansas. It is the great central summit of the Continent, and is properly marked, on all maps, in honor of the first man that ever stood upon it, Fremont's Peak.

The reader will notice, when we reach the period just prior to the opening of the California war, that it also fell to the lot of Fremont to unfurl the banner of our country for the first time from the top of the Sierra, on a mountain range near the Pacific coast at Hawk's Peak.

On the 19th, the returning party repassed the point where the waters divide, to seek the Atlantic and Pacific, and reached Rock Independence on the evening of the 22d. Except in a depression on the summit, where there is a scanty growth of shrubs and a solitary dwarf pine, the rock is entirely bare. Wherever the surface is sufficiently smooth, and in some instances as high up as sixty or eighty feet, the names of visitors are inscribed. Those of traders, missionaries, and scientific travellers, are legible at all points.

Having planted the Flag of the Union on the topmost peak of the central mountains, and inscribed

the symbol dear to all believing hearts upon the mighty monumental rock at their base, he had fulfilled the holiest aspirations of patriotism and piety, and, as the explorer of the vast interior of North America, had pledged and consecrated it to Republican Freedom and Christian Civilization.

As his instructions required him to survey the course and bed of the Platte, if possible, he sent the main body of his men across the country to Goat Island, with orders to remain there until he rejoined them, and with Mr. Preuss and five of his best men, namely, Clement Lambert, Basil Lajeunesse, Honoré Ayot, Benoist, and Descoteaux, he pursued the descending river. The India-rubber boat was filled with air and placed in the water, with what was necessary for their purpose, and they put forth upon its current. The thrilling adventures of the voyage, he relates as follows:—

"There appeared no scarcity of water, and we took on board, with various instruments and baggage, provisions for ten or twelve days. We paddled down the river rapidly, for our little craft was light as a duck on the water; and the sun had been sometime risen when we heard before us a hollow roar, which we supposed to be that of a fall, of which we had heard a vague rumor, but whose exact locality no one had been able to describe to us. We were approaching a ridge, through which the river passes by a place called 'cañon,' (pronounced *kanyon,*) a Spanish word signifying a piece of artillery, the barrel of a gun, or any kind of tube; and which, in this country, has been adopted to describe the passage

of a river between perpendicular rocks of great height, which frequently approach each other so closely overhead as to form a kind of tunnel over the stream, which foams along below, half-choked up by fallen fragments. Between the mouth of the Sweetwater and Goat Island, there is probably a fall of three hundred feet, and that was principally made in the cañons before us; as, without them, the water was comparatively smooth. As we neared the ridge, the river made a sudden turn, and swept squarely down against one of the walls of the cañon with a great velocity and so steep a descent that it had to the eye the appearance of an inclined plane. When we launched into this, the men jumped overboard, to check the velocity of the boat, but were soon in water up to their necks, and our boat ran on; but we succeeded in bringing her to a small point of rocks on the right, at the mouth of the cañon. Here was a kind of elevated sand beach, not many yards square, backed by the rocks, and around the point the river swept at a right angle. Trunks of trees deposited on jutting points twenty or thirty feet above and other marks showed that the water here frequently rose to a considerable height. The ridge was of the same decomposing granite already mentioned, and the water had worked the surface in many places into a wavy surface of ridges and holes. We ascended the rocks to reconnoitre the ground, and from the summit the passage appeared to be a continued cataract foaming over many obstructions and broken by a number of small falls. We saw nowhere a fall answering to that which had been de-

scribed to us as having twenty or twenty-five feet; but still concluded this to be the place in question, as, in the season of floods, the rush of the river against the wall would produce a great rise, and the waters, reflected squarely off, would descend through the passage in a sheet of foam, having every appearance of a large fall. Eighteen years previous to this time, as I subsequently learned from himself, Mr. Fitzpatrick, somewhere above on this river, had embarked with a valuable cargo of beaver. Unacquainted with the stream, which he believed would conduct him safely to the Missouri, he came unexpectedly into this cañon, where he was wrecked, with the total loss of his furs. It would have been a work of great time and labor to pack our baggage across the ridge, and I determined to run the cañon. We all again embarked, and at first attempted to check the way of the boat; but the water swept through with so much violence that we narrowly escaped being swamped, and were obliged to let her go in the full force of the current and trust to the skill of the boatmen. The dangerous places in this cañon were where huge rocks had fallen from above, and hemmed in the already narrow pass of the river to an open space of three or four and five feet. These obstructions raised the water considerably above, which was sometimes precipitated over in a fall; and at other places, where this dam was too high, rushed through the contracted opening with tremendous violence. Had our boat been made of wood, in passing the narrows she would have been staved; but her elasticity preserved her unhurt from every shock, and she seemed fairly to leap over the falls.

"In this way we passed three cataracts in succession, where, perhaps, one hundred feet of smooth water intervened; and finally, with a shout of pleasure at our success, issued from our tunnel into the open day beyond. We were so delighted with the performance of our boat, and so confident in her powers, that we would not have hesitated to leap a fall of ten feet with her. We put to shore for breakfast at some willows on the right bank, immediately below the mouth of the cañon; for it was now eight o'clock, and we had been working since daylight, and were all wet, fatigued, and hungry. While the men were preparing breakfast, I went out to reconnoitre. The view was very limited. The course of the river was smooth, so far as I could see; on both sides were broken hills; and but a mile or two below was another high ridge. The rock at the mouth of the cañon was still the decomposing granite, with great quantities of mica, which made a very glittering sand.

"We reëmbarked at nine o'clock, and in about twenty minutes reached the next cañon. Landing on a rocky shore at its commencement we ascended the ridge to reconnoitre. Portage was out of the question. So far as we could see, the jagged rocks pointed out the course of the cañon, on a winding line of seven or eight miles. It was simply a narrow, dark chasm in the rock; and here the perpendicular faces were much higher than in the previous pass, being at this end two or three hundred, and further down, as we afterward ascertained, five hundred feet in vertical height. Our previous success had made

us bold, and we determined again to run the cañon. Everything was secured as firmly as possible; and, having divested ourselves of the greater part of our clothing, we pushed into the stream. To save our chronometer from accident, Mr. Preuss took it, and attempted to proceed along the shore on the masses of rock, which in places were piled up on either side; but, after he had walked about five minutes, everything like shore disappeared, and the vertical wall came squarely down into the water. He therefore waited until we came up. An ugly pass lay before us. We had made fast to the stern of the boat a strong rope about fifty feet long; and three of the men clambered along among the rocks, and with this rope let her down slowly through the pass. In several places high rocks lay scattered about in the channel; and in the narrows it required all our strength and skill to avoid staving the boat on the sharp points. In one of these, the boat proved a little too broad, and stuck fast for an instant, while the water flew over us; fortunately it was but for an instant, as our united strength forced her immediately through. The water swept overboard only a sextant and a pair of saddlebags. I caught the sextant as it passed by me; but the saddlebags became the prey of the whirlpools. We reached the place where Mr. Preuss was standing, took him on board, and, with the aid of the boat, put the men with the rope on the succeeding pile of rocks. We found this passage much worse than the previous one, and our position was rather a bad one. To go back was impossible; before us, the cataract was a sheet of foam; and, shut

up in the chasm by the rocks, which in some places seemed almost to meet overhead, the roar of the water was deafening. We pushed off again; but, after making a little distance, the force of the current became too great for the men on shore, and two of them let go the rope. Lajeunesse, the third man, hung on, and was jerked headforemost into the river from a rock about twelve feet high; and down the boat shot like an arrow, Basil following us in the rapid current, and exerting all his strength to keep in mid channel—his head only seen occasionally like a black spot in the white foam. How far we went, I do not exactly know; but we succeeded in turning the boat into an eddy below. '*'Cré Dieu,*' said Basil Lajeunesse, as he arrived immediately after us, '*Je crois bien que j'ai nagé un demi mile,*'—'I believe, indeed, that I have swum half a mile.' He had owed his life to his skill as a swimmer; and I determined to take him and the others on board and trust to skill and fortune to reach the other end in safety. We placed ourselves on our knees, with the short paddles in our hands, the most skilful boatman being at the bow; and again we commenced our rapid descent. We cleared rock after rock, and shot past fall after fall, our little boat seeming to play with the cataract. We became flushed with success and familiar with the danger; and, yielding to the excitement of the occasion, broke forth together into a Canadian boat song. Singing, or rather shouting, we dashed along; and were, I believe, in the midst of the chorus, when the boat struck a concealed rock immediately at the foot of a fall, which whirled her over in an instant.

Three of my men could not swim, and my first feeling was to assist them, and save some of our effects; but a sharp concussion or two convinced me that I had not yet saved myself. A few strokes brought me into an eddy, and I landed on a pile of rocks on the left side. Looking around, I saw that Mr. Preuss had gained the shore on the same side, about twenty yards below; and a little climbing and swimming soon brought him to my side. On the opposite side, against the wall, lay the boat bottom up; and Lambert was in the act of saving Descoteaux, whom he had grasped by the hair, and who could not swim; '*Lache pas,*' said he, as I afterward learned, '*lache pas, cher frère,*'—Don't let go, don't let go, dear brother.' '*Crains pas,*' was the reply, '*Je m'en vais mourir avant que de te lâcher,*'—'Fear not, I will die before I let you go.' Such was the reply of courage and generosity in this danger. For a hundred yards below, the current was covered with floating books and boxes, bales of blankets, and scattered articles of clothing; and so strong and boiling was the stream that even our heavy instruments, which were all in cases kept on the surface, and the sextant, circle, and the long black box of the telescope, were in view at once. For a moment, I felt somewhat disheartened. All our books—almost every record of the journey—our journals and registers of astronomical and barometrical observations—had been lost in a moment. But it was no time to indulge in regrets; and I immediately set about endeavoring to save something from the wreck. Making ourselves understood as well as possible by signs, (for nothing could

be heard in the roar of waters,) we commenced our operations. Of everything on board, the only article that had been saved was my double-barrelled gun, which Descoteaux had caught, and clung to with drowning tenacity. The men continued down the river on the left bank. Mr. Preuss and myself descended on the side we were on; and Lajeunesse, with a paddle in his hand, jumped on the boat alone and continued down the cañon. She was now light, and cleared every bad place with much less difficulty. In a short time, he was joined by Lambert; and the search was continued for about a mile and a half, which was as far as the boat could proceed in the pass.

"Here the walls were about five hundred feet high, and the fragments of rocks from above had choked the river into a hollow pass but one or two feet above the surface. Through this and the interstices of the rock the water found its way. Favored beyond our expectations, all of our registers had been recovered, with the exception of one of my journals, which contained the notes and incidents of travel, and topographical descriptions, a number of scattered astronomical observations, principally meridian altitudes of the sun, and our barometrical register west of Laramie. Fortunately, our other journals contained duplicates of the most important barometrical observations which had been taken in the mountains. These, with a few scattered notes, were all that had been preserved of our meteorological observations. In addition to these, we saved the circle; and these, with a few blankets, constituted everything that had been rescued from the waters.

"The day was running rapidly away, and it was necessary to reach Goat Island, whither the party had preceded us, before night. In this uncertain country, the traveller is so much in the power of chance that we became somewhat uneasy in regard to them. Should anything have occurred in the brief interval of our separation to prevent our rejoining them, our situation would be rather a desperate one. We had not a morsel of provisions—our arms and ammunition were gone—and we were entirely at the mercy of any straggling party of savages, and not a little in danger of starvation. We therefore set out at once in two parties, Mr. Preuss and myself on the left, and the men on the opposite side of the river. Climbing out of the cañon, we found ourselves in a very broken country, where we were not yet able to recognize any locality. The scenery was extremely picturesque, and, notwithstanding our forlorn condition, we were frequently obliged to stop and admire it. Our progress was not very rapid. We had emerged from the water half-naked, and, on arriving at the top of the precipice, I found myself with only one moccasin. The fragments of rock made walking painful, and I was frequently obliged to stop and pull out the thorns of the *cactus,* here the prevailing plant, and with which a few minutes' walk covered the bottom of my feet. From this ridge the river emerged into a smiling prairie, and, descending to the bank for water, we were joined by Benoist. The remainder of the party were out of sight, having taken a more inland route. We crossed the river repeatedly—sometimes able to ford it, and sometimes

swimming—climbed over the ridges of two more cañons, and towards evening reached the cut, which we here named the Hot Spring Gate. On our previous visit in July, we had not entered this pass, reserving it for our descent in the boat; and when we entered it this evening Mr. Preuss was a few hundred feet in advance. Heated with the long march, he came suddenly upon a fine bold spring gushing from the rock, about ten feet above the river. Eager to enjoy the crystal water, he threw himself down for a hasty draught, and took a mouthful of water almost boiling hot. He said nothing to Benoist, who laid himself down to drink; but the steam from the water arrested his eagerness, and he escaped the hot draught. We had no thermometer to ascertain the temperature, but I could hold my hand in the water just long enough to count two seconds. There are eight or ten of these springs, discharging themselves by streams large enough to be called runs. A loud hollow noise was heard from the rock, which I supposed to be produced by the fall of the water. The strata immediately where they issue is a fine white and calcareous sandstone, covered with an incrustation of common salt. Leaving this Thermopylæ of the West, in a short walk we reached the red ridge which has been described as lying just above Goat Island. Ascending this, we found some fresh tracks and a button, which showed that the other men had already arrived. A shout from the man who first reached the top of the ridge, responded to from below, informed us that our friends were all on the island; and we were soon among them. We found

some pieces of buffalo standing around the fire for us, and managed to get some dry clothes among the people. A sudden storm of rain drove us into the best shelter we could find, where we slept soundly, after one of the most fatiguing days I have ever experienced."

A week afterwards, at a point of course much lower down, another attempt was made to survey the river, which is thus described:—

"At this place I had determined to make another attempt to descend the Platte by water, and accordingly spent two days in the construction of a bull-boat. Men were sent out on the evening of our arrival, the necessary number of bulls killed, and their skins brought to camp. Four of the best of them were strongly sewed together with buffalo sinew, and stretched over a basket frame of willow. The seams were then covered with ashes and tallow, and the boat left exposed to the sun for the greater part of one day, which was sufficient to dry and contract the skin, and make the whole work solid and strong. It had a rounded bow, was eight feet long and five broad, and drew with four men about four inches water. On the morning of the 15th we embarked in our hide-boat, Mr. Preuss and myself, with two men. We dragged her over the sands for three or four miles, and then left her on a bar, and abandoned entirely all further attempts to navigate this river. The names given by the Indians are always remarkably appropriate; and certainly none was ever more so than that which they have given to this stream—'The Nebraska, or Shallow River.' Walking stead-

ily the remainder of the day, a little before dark we overtook our people at their evening camp, about twenty-one miles below the junction. The next morning we crossed the Platte, and continued our way down the river bottom on the left bank, where we found an excellent, plainly beaten road."

On the morning of October 1, the cow-bells were heard at the break of day on the Missourian farms. St. Louis was reached on the 17th, and Lieutenant Fremont reported himself to the chief of his corps at the city of Washington on the 23d of October.

CHAPTER III

Second Expedition.—Kansas.—Salt Lake.—Columbia River.—Central Basin.—Sierra Nevada.—California.—Kit Carson.—Wahsatch Mountains.—Three Parks.

EARLY in the Spring of 1843, Mr. Fremont started on his Second Expedition. His instructions were to connect his explorations of the preceding year with the surveys of Commander Wilkes on the coast of the Pacific, so as to give a connected view of the great interior tracts of the Continent.

The party was placed in a state of final preparation for its long march at the town of Kansas, near the junction of the river of that name with the Missouri. Mr. Thomas Fitzpatrick, whom an experience of many years' hardship and exposure in the western regions fitted for the post, was selected as guide, and proved of invaluable service. Mr. Charles Preuss was attached to the expedition in the same capacity as in the former one. Mr. Theodore Talbot, of Washington City, and Mr. Frederick Dwight, of Massachusetts, accompanied the party. Jacob Dodson, a free young colored man of Washington City, who volunteered for the service, was found most useful and worthy of confidence in all the perils and trials of the journey. L. Maxwell, who had accompanied the former expedition, and was on his way to Taos, joined the party at Kansas. Two Delaware

Indians—a fine-looking old man and his son—were engaged as hunters. There were thirty-two men of the party, constituting in all forty persons besides the commander. They were generally armed with Hall's carbines, and took with them a brass twelve-pound howitzer. The hunters and Delawares had rifles. The camp equipage and provisions were transported in twelve carts, drawn each by two mules; and a light, covered spring-wagon, well-mounted, carried the instruments.

The expedition started on the morning of the 29th of May, 1843. A few days afterwards Mr. Gilpin, of Missouri, joined it. Its route was along the line of the Kansas, to the mouth of the Republican Fork, which it followed some distance, thence across the country to St. Vrain's Fort, on the south fork of the Platte, which it reached on the 4th of July. On the 6th it left St. Vrain's, and continued on up the Platte. On the 10th, snow fell heavily during the night on the mountains, and in the morning Pike's Peak was covered from the summit as far down as it was visible with glittering white, giving it a luminous and grand appearance. On the 14th the party reached the point where the Boiling Spring River enters the Arkansas. Here Fremont was delighted to meet and again secure the services of Kit Carson. Having discovered that it would not be possible to obtain supplies from Taos, he determined without delay to return to St. Vrain's, having first despatched Carson to procure, if possible, a reinforcement of mules from Mr. Charles Bent, whose post was about seventy-five miles lower down on the Arkansas, and rejoin

him at St. Vrain's. On the 16th the party resumed its journey up the Boiling Spring River, so called in consequence of some very remarkable springs, which Mr. Fremont visited the next day.

"July 20. We continued our march up the stream along a green sloping bottom, between pine hills on the one hand, and the main Black Hills on the other, towards the ridge which separates the waters of the Platte from those of the Arkansas. As we approached the dividing ridge, the whole valley was radiant with flowers; blue, yellow, pink, white, scarlet, and purple vied with each other in splendor. Esparcette was one of the highly characteristic plants, and a bright-looking flower *(gaillardia aristata)* was very frequent; but the most abundant plant along our road to-day was *geranium maculatum*, which is the characteristic plant on this portion of the dividing grounds. Crossing to the waters of the Platte, fields of blue flax added to the magnificence of this mountain garden; this was occasionally four feet in height, which was a luxuriance of growth that I rarely saw this almost universal plant attain throughout the journey."

Mr. Fitzpatrick had been left behind a month before, to follow on with twenty-five men, and the heavier baggage of the expedition.

"Reaching St. Vrain's Fort on the morning of the 23d, we found Mr. Fitzpatrick and his party in good order and excellent health, and my true and reliable friend, Kit Carson, who had brought with him ten good mules with the necessary pack-saddles. Mr. Fitzpatrick, who had often endured every ex-

tremity of want during the course of his mountain life, and knew well the value of provisions in this country, had watched over our stock with jealous vigilance, and there was an abundance of flour, rice, sugar, and coffee in the camp; and again we fared luxuriously. Meat was, however, very scarce; and two very small pigs, which we obtained at the fort, did not go far among forty men. Mr. Fitzpatrick had been here a week, during which time his men had been occupied in refitting the camp; and the repose had been very beneficial to his animals, which were now in tolerably good condition.

"I had been able to obtain no certain information in regard to the character of the passes in this portion of the Rocky Mountain range, which had always been represented as impracticable for carriages, but the exploration of which was incidentally contemplated by my instructions, with the view of finding some convenient point of passage for the road of emigration, which would enable it to reach, on a more direct line, the usual ford of the Great Colorado—a place considered as determined by the nature of the country beyond that river. It is singular, that, immediately at the foot of the mountains, I could find no one sufficiently acquainted with them to guide us to the plains at their western base; but the race of trappers who formerly lived in their recesses has almost entirely disappeared—dwindled to a few scattered individuals—some one or two of whom are regularly killed in the course of each year by the Indians."

Having determined to traverse the eastern side of

the Medicine Bow Mountains to find, if possible, a pass through them, Mr. Fremont again divided his party, sending Fitzpatrick with a large portion of it to the mouth of the Laramie, and thence by the usual emigrant route to Fort Hall, there to await his arrival.

"Our Delaware Indians having determined to return to their homes, it became necessary to provide this party with a good hunter; and I accordingly engaged in that capacity Alexander Godey, a young man about twenty-five years of age, who had been in this country six or seven years, all of which time had been actively employed in hunting for the support of the posts, or in solitary trading expeditions among the Indians. In courage and professional skill he was a formidable rival to Carson, and constantly afterwards was among the best and most efficient of the party, and in difficult situations was of incalculable value.

"For my own party I selected the following men, a number of whom old associations rendered agreeable to me:—

"Charles Preuss, Christopher Carson, Basil Lajeunesse, François Badeau, J. B. Bernier, Louis Menard, Raphael Proue, Jacob Dodson, Louis Zindel, Henry Lee, J. B. Derosier, François Lajeunesse, and Auguste Vasquez."

Going through what is called the Medicine Butte Pass, Fremont followed the Platte and Sweetwater, and crossed the dividing ridge, along the southern border of the South Pass, which is about twenty miles in width. He then directed his course towards

Bear River, a tributary of the Great Salt Lake on the north. Many of his animals died during this part of the journey, and it was not accomplished without considerable difficulty and hardship.

On the 21st of August, they reached the fertile and picturesque valley of Bear River, the principal tributary of the Great Salt Lake.

"We were now entering a region which, for us, possessed a strange and extraordinary interest. We were upon the waters of the famous lake which forms a salient point among the remarkable geographical features of the country, and around which the vague and superstitious accounts of the trappers had thrown a delightful obscurity, which we anticipated pleasure in dispelling, but which, in the meantime, left a crowded field for the exercise of our imagination.

"In about six miles' travel from our encampment, we reached one of the points in our journey to which we had always looked forward with great interest—the famous Beer Springs, which, on account of the effervescing gas and acid taste, had received their name from the voyageurs and trappers of the country, who, in the midst of their rude and hard lives, are fond of finding some fancied resemblance to the luxuries they rarely have the good fortune to enjoy.

"Although somewhat disappointed in the expectations which various descriptions had led me to form of unusual beauty of situation and scenery, I found it altogether a place of very great interest; and a traveller for the first time in a volcanic region remains in a constant excitement, and at every step is

arrested by something remarkable and new. There is a confusion of interesting objects gathered together in a small space. Around the place of encampment the Beer Springs were numerous; but, as far as we could ascertain, were entirely confined to that locality in the bottom. In the bed of the river, in front, for a space of several hundred yards, they were very abundant; the effervescing gas rising up and agitating the water in countless bubbling columns."

As they approached the lake they passed over a country of bold and striking scenery, and through several "gates," as they called certain narrow valleys. The "standing rock" is a huge column, occupying the centre of one of these passes. It fell from a height of perhaps 3,000 feet, and happened to remain in its present upright position.

At last, on the 6th of September, the object for which their eyes had long been straining, was brought to view.

"September 6. This time we reached the butte without any difficulty; and, ascending to the summit, immediately at our feet beheld the object of our anxious search, the waters of the Inland Sea, stretching in still and solitary grandeur far beyond the limit of our vision. It was one of the great points of the exploration; and as we looked eagerly over the lake in the first emotions of excited pleasure, I am doubtful if the followers of Balboa felt more enthusiasm when, from the heights of the Andes, they saw for the first time the great Western Ocean. It was certainly a magnificent object, and a noble *terminus* to

this part of our expedition; and to travellers so long shut up among mountain ranges, a sudden view over the expanse of silent waters had in it something sublime. Several large islands raised their high rocky heads out of the waves; but whether or not they were timbered was still left to our imagination, as the distance was too great to determine if the dark hues upon them were woodland or naked rock. During the day the clouds had been gathering black over the mountains to the westward, and while we were looking a storm burst down with sudden fury upon the lake, and entirely hid the islands from our view.

"On the edge of the stream a favorable spot was selected in a grove; and, felling the timber, we made a strong *corál,* or horse-pen, for the animals, and a little fort for the people who were to remain. We were now probably in the country of the Utah Indians, though none reside upon the lake. The India-rubber boat was repaired with prepared cloth and gum, and filled with air, in readiness for the next day.

"The provisions which Carson had brought with him being now exhausted, and our stock reduced to a small quantity of roots, I determined to retain with me only a sufficient number of men for the execution of our design; and accordingly seven were sent back to Fort Hall, under the guidance of François Lajeunesse, who, having been for many years a trapper in the country, was an experienced mountaineer.

"We formed now but a small family. With Mr. Preuss and myself, Carson, Bernier, and Basil Lajeunesse had been selected for the boat expedition—

the first ever attempted on this interior sea; and Badeau, with Derosier, and Jacob, (the colored man,) were to be left in charge of the camp. We were favored with most delightful weather. Around our fire to-night were many speculations on what to-morrow would bring forth; and in our busy conjectures we fancied that we should find every one of the large islands a tangled wilderness of trees and shrubbery, teeming with game of every description that the neighboring region afforded, and which the foot of a white man or Indian had never violated. Frequently, during the day, clouds had rested on the summits of their lofty mountains, and we believed that we should find clear streams and springs of fresh water; and we indulged in anticipations of the luxurious repasts with which we were to indemnify ourselves for past privations. Neither, in our discussions, were the whirlpool and other mysterious dangers forgotten, which Indian and hunters' stories attributed to this unexplored lake. The men had discovered that, instead of being strongly sewed, (like that of the preceding year, which had so triumphantly rode the cañons of the Upper Great Platte,) our present boat was only pasted together in a very insecure manner, the maker having been allowed so little time in the construction that he was obliged to crowd the labor of two months into several days. The insecurity of the boat was sensibly felt by us; and, mingled with the enthusiasm and excitement that we all felt at the prospect of an undertaking which had never before been accomplished, was a certain impression of danger, sufficient to give

a serious character to our conversation. The momentary view which had been had of the lake the day before, its great extent and rugged islands, dimly seen amidst the dark waters in the obscurity of the sudden storm, were well calculated to heighten the idea of undefined danger with which the lake was generally associated.

" September 8. A calm, clear day, with a sunrise temperature of 41°. In view of our present enterprise, a part of the equipment of the boat had been made to consist of three air-tight bags, about three feet long, and capable each of containing five gallons. These had been filled with water the night before, and were now placed in the boat, with our blankets and instruments, consisting of a sextant, telescope, spy-glass, thermometer, and barometer.

" September 9. The day was clear and calm; the thermometer at sunrise at 49°. As is usual with the trappers on the eve of any enterprise, our people had made dreams, and theirs happened to be a bad one—one which always preceded evil—and consequently they looked very gloomy this morning; but we hurried through our breakfast, in order to make an early start, and have all the day before us for our adventure. The channel in a short distance became so shallow that our navigation was at an end, being merely a sheet of soft mud, with a few inches of water, and sometimes none at all, forming the low-water shore of the lake. All this place was absolutely covered with flocks of screaming plover. We took off our clothes, and, getting overboard, commenced dragging the boat—making, by this opera-

tion, a very curious trail, and a very disagreeable smell in stirring up the mud as we sank above the knee at every step. The water here was still fresh, with only an insipid and disagreeable taste, probably derived from the bed of fetid mud. After proceeding in this way about a mile, we came to a small black ridge on the bottom, beyond which the water became suddenly salt, beginning gradually to deepen, and the bottom was sandy and firm. It was a remarkable division, separating the fresh water of the rivers from the briny water of the lake, which was entirely *saturated* with common salt. Pushing our little vessel across the narrow boundary, we sprang on board, and at length were afloat on the waters of the unknown sea.

"We did not steer for the mountainous islands, but directed our course towards a lower one, which it had been decided we should first visit, the summit of which was formed like the crater at the upper end of Bear River Valley. So long as we could touch the bottom with our paddles, we were very gay; but gradually, as the water deepened, we became more still in our frail bateau of gum cloth distended with air, and with pasted seams. Although the day was very calm, there was a considerable swell on the lake; and there were white patches of foam on the surface, which were slowly moving to the southward, indicating the set of a current in that direction, and recalling the recollection of the whirlpool stories. The water continued to deepen as we advanced; the lake becoming almost transparently clear, of an extremely beautiful bright-green color; and the spray, which

was thrown into the boat and over our clothes, was directly converted into a crust of common salt, which covered also our hands and arms. 'Captain,' said Carson, who for some time had been looking suspiciously at some whitening appearances outside the nearest islands, 'what are those yonder?—won't you just take a look with the glass?' We ceased paddling for a moment, and found them to be the caps of the waves that were beginning to break under the force of a strong breeze that was coming up the lake. The form of the boat seemed to be an admirable one, and it rode on the waves like a water bird; but, at the same time, it was extremely slow in its progress. When we were a little more than half-way across the reach, two of the divisions between the cylinders gave way, and it required the constant use of the bellows to keep in a sufficient quantity of air. For a long time we scarcely seemed to approach our island, but gradually we worked across the rougher sea of the open channel, into the smoother water under the lee of the island; and began to discover that what we took for a long row of pelicans, ranged on the beach, were only low cliffs whitened with salt by the spray of the waves; and about noon we reached the shore, the transparency of the water enabling us to see the bottom at a considerable depth.

"The cliffs and masses of rock along the shore were whitened by an incrustation of salt where the waves dashed up against them; and the evaporating water, which had been left in holes and hollows on the surface of the rocks, was covered with a crust of salt about one-eighth of an inch in thickness.

"Carrying with us the barometer and other instruments, in the afternoon we ascended to the highest point of the island—a bare rocky peak, 800 feet above the lake. Standing on the summit, we enjoyed an extended view of the lake, enclosed in a basin of rugged mountains, which sometimes left marshy flats and extensive bottoms between them and the shore, and in other places came directly down into the water with bold and precipitous bluffs.

"As we looked over the vast expanse of water spread out beneath us, and strained our eyes along the silent shores over which hung so much doubt and uncertainty, and which were so full of interest to us, I could hardly repress the almost irresistible desire to continue our exploration; but the lengthening snow on the mountains was a plain indication of the advancing season, and our frail linen boat appeared so insecure that I was unwilling to trust our lives to the uncertainties of the lake. I therefore unwillingly resolved to terminate our survey here, and remain satisfied for the present with what we had been able to add to the unknown geography of the region. We felt pleasure also in remembering that we were the first who, in the traditionary annals of the country, had visited the islands, and broken, with the cheerful sound of human voices, the long solitude of the place.

"At sunset, the temperature was 70°. We had arrived just in time to obtain a meridian altitude of the sun, and other observations were obtained this evening, which place our camp in latitude 41° 10′ 42″, and longitude 112° 21′ 05″ from Greenwich.

From a discussion of the barometrical observations made during our stay on the shores of the lake, we have adopted 4,200 feet for its elevation above the gulf of Mexico. In the first disappointment we felt from the dissipation of our dream of the fertile islands, I called this Disappointment Island.

"Out of the driftwood, we made ourselves pleasant little lodges, open to the water, and, after having kindled large fires to excite the wonder of any straggling savage on the lake shores, lay down, for the first time in a long journey, in perfect security; no one thinking about his arms. The evening was extremely bright and pleasant; but the wind rose during the night, and the waves began to break heavily on the shore, making our island tremble. I had not expected in our inland journey to hear the roar of an ocean surf; and the strangeness of our situation, and the excitement we felt in the associated interests of the place, made this one of the most interesting nights I remember during our long expedition.

"In the morning, the surf was breaking heavily on the shore, and we were up early. The lake was dark and agitated, and we hurried through our scanty breakfast, and embarked—having first filled one of the buckets with water from the lake, of which it was intended to make salt. The sun had risen by the time we were ready to start; and it was blowing a strong gale of wind, almost directly off the shore, and raising a considerable sea, in which our boat strained very much. It roughened as we got away from the island, and it required all the efforts of the men to make any head against the wind and sea; the

gale rising with the sun; and there was danger of being blown into one of the open reaches beyond the island. At the distance of half a mile from the beach, the depth of water was sixteen feet, with a clay bottom; but, as the working of the boat was very severe labor, and during the operation of rounding it was necessary to cease paddling, during which the boat lost considerable way, I was unwilling to discourage the men, and reluctantly gave up my intention of ascertaining the depth, and the character of the bed. There was a general shout in the boat when we found ourselves in one fathom, and we soon after landed."

On the afternoon of the 12th they started from their Salt Lake encampment, for the Columbia River, and reached Fort Hall on the 18th, at sunset. Here the party was again united, and preparations were made to push on to the Columbia.

"The early approach of winter, and the difficulty of supporting a large party, determined me to send back a number of the men who had become satisfied that they were not fitted for the laborious service and frequent privation to which they were necessarily exposed, and which there was reason to believe would become more severe in the further extension of the voyage. I accordingly called them together, and, informing them of my intention to continue our journey during the ensuing winter, in the course of which they would probably be exposed to considerable hardship, succeeded in prevailing upon a number of them to return voluntarily. Among these, I regretted very much to lose Basil Lajeunesse, one of

the best men in my party, who was obliged, by the condition of his family, to be at home in the coming winter."

Fremont, with the residue of his party, started on the 23d of September, and pursued, for the most part, the course of the Snake River, or Lewis's Fork, and came in sight of the Columbia on the 25th of October, at the junction of the Wahlahwahlah, where it was twelve hundred yards wide. On the 4th of November they reached the Dalles of the Columbia, so called from the trough-like aspect of the narrow chasm, at one place only fifty-eight yards wide, through which the great river passes between perpendicular walls of basaltic rock of an average height of twenty-five feet. From the Dalles to Fort Vancouver the route was pursued in a canoe. Fremont, Preuss, Bernier, and Dodson, with three Indians to whom the canoe belonged, constituted the party. The remainder were left in charge of Carson.

After collecting at the fort the necessary provisions and supplies to refit and support his party during the winter journey on which they were about to enter,—in which he was aided by the cordial cooperation of Dr. McLaughlin, the executive officer of the Hudson Bay Company,—he started on his return to the Dalles in the afternoon of November 10, his flotilla consisting of a Mackinaw barge and three canoes.

"November 13. We had a day of disagreeable and cold rain, and late in the afternoon began to approach the rapids of the cascades.

"The current was now very swift, and we were

obliged to *cordelle* the boat along the left shore, where the bank was covered with large masses of rocks. Night overtook us at the upper end of the island, a short distance below the cascades, and we halted on the open point. In the meantime, the lighter canoes, paddled altogether by Indians, had passed ahead, and were out of sight. With them was the lodge, which was the only shelter we had, with most of the bedding and provisions. We shouted, and fired guns, but all to no purpose, as it was impossible for them to hear above the roar of the river; and we remained all night without shelter, the rain pouring down all the time. The old voyageurs did not appear to mind it much, but covered themselves up as well as they could, and lay down on the sand-beach, where they remained quiet until morning. The rest of us spent a rather miserable night; and, to add to our discomfort, the incessant rain extinguished our fires; and we were glad when at last daylight appeared, and we again embarked.

"Crossing to the right bank, we *cordelled* the boat along the shore, there being no longer any use for the paddles, and put into a little bay below the upper rapids. Here we found the lodge pitched, and about twenty Indians sitting around a blazing fire within, making a luxurious breakfast with salmon, bread, butter, sugar, coffee, and other provisions."

In the afternoon of November 18, they reached the Dalles. The camp was immediately busy with the last preparations for a journey through the unexplored regions between the Columbia River and California, and embracing the central basin of the

continent between the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Nevada. It was not originally designed to cross the latter, but to turn homewards over the Rocky Mountains, at some pass near the head waters of the Arkansas.

"This was our projected line of return—a great part of it absolutely new to geographical, botanical, and geological science—and the subject of reports in relation to lakes, rivers, deserts, and savages hardly above the condition of mere wild animals, which inflamed desire to know what this *terra incognita* really contained. It was a serious enterprise, at the commencement of winter, to undertake the traverse of such a region, and with a party consisting only of twenty-five persons, and they of many nations—American, French, German, Canadian, Indian, and colored—and most of them young, several being under twenty-one years of age. All knew that a strange country was to be explored, and dangers and hardships to be encountered; but no one blenched at the prospect. On the contrary, courage and confidence animated the whole party. Cheerfulness, readiness, subordination, prompt obedience, characterized all; nor did any extremity of peril and privation, to which we were afterwards exposed, ever belie, or derogate from, the fine spirit of this brave and generous commencement. The course of the narrative will show at what point, and for what reasons, we were prevented from the complete execution of this plan, after having made considerable progress upon it, and how we were forced by desert plains, and mountain ranges, and deep snows, far to

the south and near to the Pacific Ocean, and along the western base of the Sierra Nevada; where, indeed, a new and ample field of exploration opened itself before us. For the present, we must follow the narrative, which will first lead us south along the valley of Fall River, and the eastern base of the Cascade range, to the Tlamath lake, from which, or its margin, three rivers go in three directions—one west, to the ocean; another north, to the Columbia; the third south, to California.

"For the support of the party, I had provided at Vancouver a supply of provisions for not less than three months, consisting principally of flour, peas, and tallow—the latter being used in cooking; and, in addition to this, I had purchased at the mission some California cattle, which were to be driven on the hoof. We had one hundred and four mules and horses—part of the latter procured from the Indians about the mission; and for the sustenance of which, our reliance was upon the grass which we should find, and the soft porous wood, which was to be its substitute when there was none.

"Mr. Perkins succeeded in obtaining as guide to the Tlamath lake two Indians, one of whom had been there, and bore the marks of several wounds he had received from some of the Indians in the neighborhood; and the other went along for company. In order to enable us to obtain horses, he despatched messengers to the various Indian villages in the neighborhood, informing them that we were desirous to purchase, and appointing a day for them to bring them in.

"We made, in the meantime, several excursions in the vicinity. Mr. Perkins walked with Mr. Preuss and myself to the heights, about nine miles distant on the opposite side of the river, whence, in fine weather, an extensive view may be had over the mountains, including seven great peaks of the Cascade range; but clouds, on this occasion, destroyed the anticipated pleasure, and we obtained bearings only to three that were visible—Mount Regnier, St. Helens, and Mount Hood. On the heights, about one mile south of the mission, a very fine view may be had of Mount Hood and St. Helens. In order to determine their positions with as much accuracy as possible, the angular distances of the peaks were measured with the sextant, at different fixed points from which they could be seen.

"November 25. We were all up early, in the excitement of turning towards home. The stars were brilliant, and the morning cold, the thermometer at daylight 26°.

Our preparations had been finally completed, and to-day we commenced our journey. The little wagon which had hitherto carried the instruments, I judged it necessary to abandon; and it was accordingly presented to the mission. In all our long travelling, it had never been overturned or injured by any accident of the road; and the only things broken were the glass lamps, and one of the front panels, which had been kicked out by an unruly Indian horse. The howitzer was the only wheeled carriage now remaining. We started about noon, when the weather had become disagreeably cold, with flurries

of snow. Our friend Mr. Perkins, whose kindness had been active and efficient during our stay, accompanied us several miles on our road; when he bade us farewell, and consigned us to the care of our guides.

"November 27. A fine view of Mount Hood this morning; a rose-colored mass of snow, bearing S. 85° W. by compass. The sky is clear, and the air cold; the thermometer 2°. 5 below zero; the trees and bushes glittering white, and the rapid stream filled with floating ice."

No one can have an adequate idea of the sufferings endured, the obstacles encountered, the perilous adventures, and fearful experiences, in this journey, without reading the whole of Fremont's Report, referring from point to point to the geography of the country, as exhibited on the map, drawn from his surveys, by his associate Charles Preuss, in 1848, under an order of the Senate of the United States. Of course, in such a work as this, only glimpses can be given of what the heroic party went through; and that can best be done in extracts from the Report of its commander.

"December 14. Our road was over a broad mountain, and we rode seven hours in a thick snowstorm, always through pine forests, when we came down upon the head waters of another stream, on which there was grass. The snow lay deep on the ground, and only the high swamp grass appeared above. The Indians were thinly clad, and I had remarked during the day that they suffered from the cold. This evening they told me that the snow was getting too deep on the mountain, and I could not

induce them to go any further. The stream we had struck issued from the mountain in an easterly direction, turning to the southward a short distance below; and, drawing its course upon the ground, they made us comprehend that it pursued its way for a long distance in that direction, uniting with many other streams, and gradually becoming a great river. Without the subsequent information which confirmed the opinion, we became immediately satisfied that this water formed the principal stream of the *Sacramento* River; and, consequently, that this main affluent of the Bay of San Francisco had its source within the limits of the United States, and opposite a tributary to the Columbia, and near the head of the Tlamath River, which goes to the ocean north of 42°, and within the United States.

"December 15. A present consisting of useful goods afforded much satisfaction to our guides; and, showing them the national flag, I explained that it was a symbol of our nation; and they engaged always to receive it in a friendly manner. The chief pointed out a course, by following which we would arrive at the big water, where no more snow was to be found. Crossing a hard frozen swamp on the further side of the Rond, we entered again the pine forest, in which very deep snow made our travelling slow and laborious.

"December 16. We travelled this morning through snow about three feet deep, which, being crusted, very much cut the feet of our animals. The mountain still gradually rose; we crossed several spring heads covered with quaking asp, otherwise

it was all pine forest. The air was dark with falling snow, which everywhere weighed down the trees. The depths of the forest were profoundly still; and below, we scarce felt a breath of the wind which whirled the snow through their branches. I found that it required some exertion of constancy to adhere steadily to one course through the woods, when we were uncertain how far the forest extended, or what lay beyond; and, on account of our animals, it would be bad to spend another night on the mountain. Towards noon the forest looked clear ahead, appearing suddenly to terminate; and beyond a certain point we could see no trees. Riding rapidly ahead to this spot, we found ourselves on the verge of a vertical and rocky wall of the mountain. At our feet—more than a thousand feet below—we looked into a green prairie country, in which a beautiful lake, some twenty miles in length, was spread along the foot of the mountains, its shores bordering with green grass. Just then the sun broke out among the clouds, and illuminated the country below, while around us the storm raged fiercely. Not a particle of ice was to be seen on the lake, or snow on its borders, and all was like summer or Spring. The glow of the sun in the valley below brightened up our hearts with sudden pleasure; and we made the woods ring with joyful shouts to those behind; and gradually, as each came up, he stopped to enjoy the unexpected scene. Shivering on snow three feet deep, and stiffening in a cold north wind, we exclaimed at once that the names of Summer Lake and Winter Ridge should be applied to these two proximate places of such sudden and violent contrast.

"We were now immediately on the verge of the forest land, in which we had been travelling so many days; and looking forward to the east, scarce a tree was to be seen. Viewed from our elevation, the face of the country exhibited only rocks and grass, and presented a region in which the *artemisia* became the principal wood, furnishing to its scattered inhabitants fuel for their fires, building material for their huts, and shelter for the small game which ministers to their hunger and nakedness. Broadly marked by the boundary of the mountain wall, and immediately below us, were the first waters of that Great Interior Basin which has the Wahsatch and Bear River Mountains for its eastern, and the Sierra Nevada for its western rim; and the edge of which we had entered upwards of three months before at the Great Salt Lake.

"January 10. We continued our reconnoissance ahead, pursuing a south direction in the basin along the ridge; the camp following slowly after. On a large trail there is never any doubt of finding suitable places for encampments. We reached the end of the basin, where we found, in a hollow of the mountain which enclosed it, an abundance of good bunch grass. Leaving a signal for the party to encamp, we continued our way up the hollow, intending to see what lay beyond the mountain. The hollow was several miles long, forming a good pass, the snow deepening to about a foot as we neared the summit. Beyond, a defile between the mountains descended rapidly about two thousand feet; and, filling up all the lower space, was a sheet of green water, some

twenty miles broad. It broke upon our eyes like the ocean. The neighboring peaks rose high above us, and we ascended one of them to obtain a better view. The waves were curling in the breeze, and their dark-green color showed it to be a body of deep water. For a long time we sat enjoying the view, for we had become fatigued with mountains, and the free expanse of moving waves was very grateful. It was set in the midst of the mountains, which, from our position, seemed to enclose it almost entirely. At the western end it communicated with the line of basins we had left a few days since; and on the opposite side it swept a ridge of snowy mountains, the foot of the Great Sierra. Its position at first inclined us to believe it Mary's Lake, but the rugged mountains were so entirely discordant with descriptions of its low rushy shores and open country, that we concluded it some unknown body of water; which it afterwards proved to be.

"January 29. The other division of the party did not come in to-night, but encamped in the upper meadow, and arrived the next morning. They had not succeeded in getting the howitzer beyond the place mentioned, and where it had been left by Mr. Preuss in obedience to my orders; and, in anticipation of the snow-banks and snow-fields still ahead, foreseeing the inevitable detention to which it would subject us, I reluctantly determined to leave it there for the time. It was of the kind invented by the French for the mountain part of their war in Algiers; and the distance it had come with us, proved how well it was adapted to its purpose. We left it, to the

great sorrow of the whole party, who were grieved to part with a companion which had made the whole distance from St. Louis, and commanded respect for us on some critical occasions, and which might be needed for the same purpose again.

"February 2. It had ceased snowing, and this morning the lower air was clear and frosty; and six or seven thousand feet above, the peaks of the Sierra now and then appeared among the rolling clouds, which were rapidly dispersing before the sun. Our Indian shook his head as he pointed to the icy pinnacles shooting high up into the sky, and seeming almost immediately above us. Crossing the river on the ice, and leaving it immediately, we commenced the ascent of the mountain along the valley of a tributary stream. The people were unusually silent; for every man knew that our enterprise was hazardous, and the issue doubtful.

"The snow deepened rapidly, and it soon became necessary to break a road. For this service, a party of ten was formed, mounted on the strongest horses; each man in succession opening the road on foot, or on horseback, until himself and his horse became fatigued, when he stepped aside; and, the remaining number passing ahead, he took his station in the rear. Leaving this stream, and pursuing a very direct course, we passed over an intervening ridge to the river we had left.

"Towards a pass which the guide indicated here, we attempted in the afternoon to force a road; but after a laborious plunging through two or three hundred yards, our best horses gave out, entirely refus-

ing to make any further effort; and, for the time, we were brought to a stand. The guide informed us that we were entering the deep snow, and here began the difficulties of the mountain; and to him, and almost to all, our enterprise seemed hopeless. I returned a short distance back, to the break in the hollow, where I met Mr. Fitzpatrick.

"The camp had been all the day occupied in endeavoring to ascend the hill, but only the best horses had succeeded. The animals generally not having sufficient strength to bring themselves up without the packs; and all the line of road between this and the springs was strewed with camp stores and equipage, and horses floundering in snow. I therefore immediately encamped on the ground with my own mess, which was in advance, and directed Mr. Fitzpatrick to encamp at the springs, and send all the animals in charge of Tabeau, with a strong guard, back to the place where they had been pastured the night before. Here was a small spot of level ground, protected on one side by the mountain and on the other sheltered by a little ridge of rock. It was an open grove of pines, which assimilated in size to the grandeur of the mountain, being frequently six feet in diameter.

"To-night we had no shelter, but we made a large fire around the trunk of one of the huge pines; and covering the snow with small boughs, on which we spread our blankets, soon made ourselves comfortable. The night was very bright and clear, though the thermometer was only at 10°. A strong wind, which sprang up at sundown, made it intensely cold; and this was one of the bitterest nights during the journey.

"Two Indians joined our party here; and one of them, an old man, immediately began to harangue us, saying that ourselves and animals would perish in the snow, and that if we would go back, he would show us another and a better way across the mountain. He spoke in a very loud voice, and there was a singular repetition of phrases and arrangement of words, which rendered his speech striking and not unmusical.

"We had now begun to understand some words, and, with the aid of signs, easily comprehended the old man's simple ideas. 'Rock upon rock—rock upon rock—snow upon snow—snow upon snow,' said he; 'even if you get over the snow, you will not be able to get down from the mountains.' He made us the sign of precipices, and showed us how the feet of the horses would slip, and throw them off from the narrow trails which led along their sides. Our Chinook, who comprehended even more readily than ourselves, and believed our situation hopeless, covered his head with his blanket, and began to weep and lament. 'I wanted to see the whites,' said he; 'I came away from my own people to see the whites, and I wouldn't care to die among them; but here'——and he looked around into the cold night and gloomy forest, and, drawing his blanket over his head, began again to lament.

"Seated around the tree, the fire illuminating the rocks and the tall bolls of the pines round about, and the old Indian haranguing, we presented a group of very serious faces.

"February 5. The night had been too cold to

sleep, and we were up very early. Our guide was standing by the fire with all his finery on; and, seeing him shiver in the cold, I threw on his shoulders one of my blankets. We missed him a few minutes afterwards, and never saw him again. He had deserted.

"While a portion of the camp were occupied in bringing up the baggage to this point, the remainder were busied in making sledges and snow-shoes. I had determined to explore the mountain ahead, and the sledges were to be used in transporting the baggage.

"February 6. Accompanied by Mr. Fitzpatrick, I sat out to-day with a reconnoitring party, on snow-shoes. We marched all in a single file, trampling the snow as heavily as we could. Crossing the open basin, in a march of about ten miles we reached the top of one of the peaks, to the left of the pass indicated by our guide. Far below us, dimmed by the distance, was a large snowless valley, bounded on the western side, at the distance of about a hundred miles, by a low range of mountains, which Carson recognized with delight as the mountains bordering the coast. 'There,' said he, 'is the little mountain—it is fifteen years ago since I saw it; but I am just as sure as if I had seen it yesterday.' Between us, then, and this low coast range, was the valley of the Sacramento; and no one who had not accompanied us through the incidents of our life for the last few months, could realize the delight with which at last we looked down upon it. At the distance of apparently thirty miles beyond us were distinguished

spots of prairie; and a dark line, which could be traced with the glass, was imagined to be the course of the river; but we were evidently at a great height above the valley, and between us and the plains extended miles of snowy fields, and broken ridges of pine-covered mountains.

"It was late in the day when we turned towards the camp; and it grew rapidly cold as it drew towards night. One of the men became fatigued, and his feet began to freeze, and, building a fire in the trunk of a dry old cedar, Mr. Fitzpatrick remained with him until his clothes could be dried, and he was in a condition to come on. After a day's march of twenty miles, we straggled into camp, one after another, at nightfall; the greater number excessively fatigued, only two of the party having ever travelled on snow-shoes before.

"All our energies were now directed to getting our animals across the snow; and it was supposed that, after all the baggage had been drawn with the sleighs over the trail we had made, it would be sufficiently hard to bear our animals. At several places, between this point and the ridge, we had discovered some grassy spots, where the wind and sun had dispersed the snow from the sides of the hills, and these were to form resting-places to support the animals for a night in their passage across. On our way across, we had set on fire several broken stumps, and dried trees, to melt holes in the snow for the camps. Its general depth was five feet; but we passed over places where it was twenty feet deep, as shown by the trees.

"With one party drawing sleighs loaded with baggage, I advanced to-day, about four miles along the trail, and encamped at the first grassy spot where we expected to bring our horses. Mr. Fitzpatrick, with another party, remained behind, to form an intermediate station between us and the animals.

"February 8. The night has been extremely cold; but perfectly still, and beautifully clear. Before the sun appeared this morning, the thermometer was 3° below zero; 1° higher, when his rays struck the lofty peaks; and 0° when they reached our camp.

"Scenery and weather combined must render these mountains beautiful in summer; the purity and deep-blue color of the sky are singularly beautiful; the days are sunny and bright, and even warm in the noon hours; and if we could be free from the many anxieties that oppress us, even now we would be delighted here; but our provisions are getting fearfully scant.

"Putting on our snow-shoes, we spent the afternoon in exploring a road ahead. The glare of the snow, combined with great fatigue, had rendered many of the people nearly blind, but we were fortunate in having some black silk handkerchiefs, which, worn as veils, very much relieved the eye.

"February 11. In the evening I received a message from Mr. Fitzpatrick, acquainting me with the utter failure of his attempt to get our mules and horses over the snow—the half-hidden trail had proved entirely too slight to support them, and they had broken through, and were plunging about or lying half-buried in snow. He was occupied in en-

deavoring to get them back to his camp; and in the meantime sent to me for further instructions. I wrote to him to send the animals immediately back to their old pastures; and, after having made mauls and shovels, turn in all the strength of his party to open and beat a road through the snow, strengthening it with branches and boughs of the pines.

"February 12. We made mauls, and worked hard at our end of the road all the day. The wind was high, but the sun bright, and the snow thawing. We worked down the face of the hill, to meet the people at the other end. Towards sundown it began to grow cold, and we shouldered our mauls and trudged back to camp.

"February 13. We continued to labor on the road; and in the course of the day had the satisfaction to see the people working down the face of the opposite hill, about three miles distant. During the morning we had the pleasure of a visit from Mr. Fitzpatrick, with the information that all was going on well. A party of Indians had passed on snow-shoes, who said they were going to the western side of the mountain after fish. This was an indication that the salmon were coming up the streams; and we could hardly restrain our impatience as we thought of them, and worked with increased vigor.

"February 14. With Mr. Preuss, I ascended today the highest peak to the right; from which we had a beautiful view of a mountain lake at our feet, about fifteen miles in length, and so entirely surrounded by mountains that we could not discover an outlet. We had taken with us a glass; but,

though we enjoyed an extended view, the valley was half hidden in mist, as when we had seen it before. Snow could be distinguished on the higher parts of the coast mountains; eastward, as far as the eye could extend, it ranged over a terrible mass of broken snowy mountains, fading off blue in the distance.

"February 16. We had succeeded in getting our animals safely to the first grassy hill; and this morning I started with Jacob on a reconnoitring expedition beyond the mountain. We travelled along the crests of narrow ridges, extending down from the mountain in the direction of the valley, from which the snow was fast melting away. On the open spots was tolerably good grass; and I judged we should succeed in getting the camp down by way of these. Towards sundown we discovered some icy spots in a deep hollow; and, descending the mountain, we encamped on the head-water of a little creek, where at last the water found its way to the Pacific.

"The night was clear and very long. We heard the cries of some wild animals, which had been attracted by our fire, and a flock of geese passed over during the night. Even these strange sounds had something pleasant to our senses in this region of silence and desolation.

"We started again early in the morning. The creek acquired a regular breadth of about twenty feet, and we soon began to hear the rushing of the water below the ice surface, over which we travelled to avoid the snow; a few miles below we broke through, where the water was several feet deep, and

halted to make a fire and dry our clothes. We continued a few miles further, walking being very laborious without snowshoes.

"I was now perfectly satisfied that we had struck the stream on which Mr. Sutter lived; and, turning about, made a hard push, and reached the camp at dark. Here we had the pleasure to find all the remaining animals, fifty-seven in number, safely arrived at the grassy hill near the camp; and here, also, we were agreeably surprised with the sight of an abundance of salt. Some of the horse-guard had gone to a neighboring hut for pine nuts, and discovered, unexpectedly, a large cake of very white, fine-grained salt, which the Indians told them they had brought from the other side of the mountain; they used it to eat with their pine nuts, and readily sold it for goods.

"On the 19th the people were occupied in making a road and bringing up the baggage; and, on the afternoon of the next day, February 20, 1844, we encamped with the animals and all the material of the camp, on the summit of the Pass in the dividing ridge, 1,000 miles by our travelled road from the Dalles of the Columbia.

"The people, who had not yet been to this point, climbed the neighboring peak to enjoy a look at the valley.

"The temperature of boiling water gave for the elevation of the encampment 9,338 feet above the sea.

"This was 2,000 feet higher than the South Pass in the Rocky Mountains, and several peaks in view

rose several thousand feet still higher. Thus, at the extremity of the continent, and near the coast, the phenomenon was seen of a range of mountains still higher than the great Rocky Mountains themselves. This extraordinary fact accounts for the Great Basin, and shows that there must be a system of small lakes and rivers here scattered over a flat country, and which the extended and lofty range of the Sierra Nevada prevents from escaping to the Pacific Ocean. Latitude 38° 44′, longitude 120° 28′.

"Thus this pass in the Sierra Nevada, which so well deserves its name of Snowy Mountain, is eleven degrees west, and about four degrees south of the South Pass.

"February 21. We now considered ourselves victorious over the mountain; having only the descent before us, and the valley under our eyes, we felt strong hope that we should force our way down. But this was a case in which the descent was not facile. Still deep fields of snow lay between, and there was a large intervening space of rough-looking mountains, through which we had yet to wind our way. Carson roused me this morning with an early fire, and we were all up long before day, in order to pass the snow-fields before the sun should render the crust soft. We enjoyed this morning a scene at sunrise, which even here was unusually glorious and beautiful. Immediately above the eastern mountains was repeated a cloud-formed mass of purple ranges, bordered with bright yellow gold; the peaks shot up into a narrow line of crimson

cloud, above which the air was filled with a greenish orange; and over all was the singular beauty of the blue sky.

"We had hard and doubtful labor yet before us, as the snow appeared to be heavier where the timber began further down, with few open spots. Ascending a height, we traced out the best line we could discover for the next day's march, and had at least the consolation to see that the mountain descended rapidly. The day had been one of April; gusty, with a few occasional flakes of snow; which, in the afternoon, enveloped the upper mountain in clouds. We watched them anxiously, as now we dreaded a snow-storm. Shortly afterwards we heard the roll of thunder, and, looking towards the valley, found it all enveloped in a thunder-storm. For us, as connected with the idea of summer, it had a singular charm; and we watched its progress with excited feelings until nearly sunset, when the sky cleared off brightly, and we saw a shining line of water directing its course towards another, a broader and larger sheet. We knew that these could be no other than the Sacramento and the bay of San Francisco; but, after our long wandering in rugged mountains, where so frequently we had met with disappointments, and where the crossing of every ridge displayed some unknown lake or river, we were yet almost afraid to believe that we were at last to escape into the genial country of which we had heard so many glowing descriptions, and dreaded again to find some vast interior lake, whose bitter waters would bring us disappointment. On the southern

shore of what appeared to be the bay, could be traced the gleaming line where entered another large stream.

"February 23. This was our most difficult day; we were forced off the ridges by the quantity of snow among the timber, and obliged to take to the mountain-sides, where, occasionally, rocks and a southern exposure afforded us a chance to scramble along. But these were steep and slippery with snow and ice; and the tough evergreens of the mountain impeded our way, tore our skins, and exhausted our patience. Some of us had the misfortune to wear moccasins with *parflêche* soles, so slippery that we could not keep our feet, and generally crawled across the snow beds. Axes and mauls were necessary to-day, to make a road through the snow. Going ahead with Carson to reconnoitre the road, we reached in the afternoon the river which made the outlet of the lake. Carson sprang over, clear across a place where the stream was compressed among rocks, but the *parflêche* sole of my moccasin glanced from the icy rock, and precipitated me into the river. It was some few seconds before I could recover myself in the current, and Carson thinking me hurt jumped in after me, and we both had an icy bath. We tried to search awhile for my gun, which had been lost in the fall, but the cold drove us out; and, making a large fire on the bank, after we had partially dried ourselves, we went back to meet the camp. We afterwards found that the gun had been slung under the ice which lined the banks of the creek.

"Using our old plan of breaking the road with alternate horses, we reached the creek in the evening, and camped on a dry open place in the ravine.

"February 25. Continuing down the river, which pursued a very direct westerly course through a narrow valley, with only a very slight and narrow bottom land, we made twelve miles, and encamped at some old Indian huts, apparently a fishing-place on the river. The bottom was covered with trees of deciduous foliage, and overgrown with vines and rushes. On a bench of the hill near by, was a field of fresh green grass, six inches long in some of the tufts, which I had the curiosity to measure. The animals were driven here; and I spent part of the afternoon sitting on a large rock among them, enjoying the pauseless rapidity with which they luxuriated in the unaccustomed food.

"The forest was imposing to-day in the magnificence of the trees; some of the pines, bearing large cones, were ten feet in diameter; cedars also abounded, and we measured one twenty-eight and a half feet in circumference four feet from the ground. This noble tree seemed here to be in its proper soil and climate. We found it on both sides of the Sierra, but most abundant on the west.

"February 26. We continued to follow the stream, the mountains on either hand increasing in height as we descended, and shutting up the river narrowly in precipices, along which we had great difficulty to get our horses.

"Near nightfall we descended into the steep ravine of a handsome creek thirty feet wide, and I

was engaged in getting the horse up the opposite hill, when I heard a shout from Carson, who had gone ahead a few hundred yards: 'Life yet,' said he as he came up, 'life yet; I have found a hill-side sprinkled with grass enough for the night.' We drove along our horses, and encamped at the place about dark, and there was just room enough to make a place for shelter on the edge of the stream. Three horses were lost to-day,—Proveau; a fine young horse from the Columbia, belonging to Charles Towns; and another Indian horse which carried our cooking utensils; the two former gave out, and the latter strayed off into the woods as we reached the camp.

"February 29. We lay shut up in the narrow ravine, and gave the animals a necessary day; and men were sent back after the others. Derosier volunteered to bring up Proveau to whom he knew I was greatly attached, as he had been my favorite horse on both expeditions. Carson and I climbed one of the nearest mountains; the forest land still extended ahead, and the valley appeared as far as ever. The packhorse was found near the camp, but Derosier did not get in.

"March 1. Derosier did not get in during the night, and leaving him to follow, as no grass remained here, we continued on over the uplands, crossing many small streams, and camped again on the river, having made six miles. Here we found the hill-side covered (although lightly) with fresh green grass; and from this time forward we found it always improving and abundant."

On the 2d of March, Mr. Preuss wandered from

the party, and was lost. Guns were fired, and every effort made to reach him. All were filled with the deepest distress at his disappearance. On the 4th of March Derosier, having volunteered the service, was sent back to attempt to find him, being charged to follow the river, not to continue the search more than a day and a half, and, at the end of that time, to turn back towards the point from which he started, where a *cache* of provisions would be left for him.

"Towards evening we heard a weak shout among the hills behind, and had the pleasure to see Mr. Preuss descending towards the camp. Like ourselves, he had travelled to-day twenty-five miles, but had seen nothing of Derosier. Knowing, on the day he was lost, that I was determined to keep the river as much as possible, he had not thought it necessary to follow the trail very closely, but walked on right and left, certain to find it somewhere along the river, searching places to obtain good views of the country. Towards sunset he climbed down towards the river, to look for the camp; but, finding, no trail, concluded that we were behind, and walked back until night came on, when, being very much fatigued, he collected driftwood and made a large fire among the rocks. The next day it became more serious, and he encamped again alone, thinking that we must have taken some other course. To go back would have been madness in his weak and starved condition, and onward towards the valley was his only hope, always in expectation of reaching it soon. His principal means of subsistence were a few roots,

which the hunters call sweet onions, having very little taste, but a good deal of nutriment, growing generally in rocky ground, and requiring a good deal of labor to get, as he had only a pocket-knife.

"Travelling the next day feebly down the river, he found five or six Indians at the huts of which we have spoken. Some were painting themselves black, and others roasting acorns. Being only one man, they did not run off, but received him kindly, and gave him a welcome supply of roasted acorns. He gave them his pocket-knife in return, and stretched out his hand to one of the Indians, who did not appear to comprehend the motion, but jumped back, as if he thought he was about to lay hold of him. They seemed afraid of him, not certain as to what he was.

"Travelling on, he came to the place where we had found the squaws. Here he found our fire still burning, and the tracks of the horses. The sight gave him sudden hope and courage; and, following as fast as he could, joined us at evening.

"March 6. We now pressed on more eagerly than ever; the river swept round in a large bend to the right; the hills lowered down entirely; and, gradually entering a broad valley, we came unexpectedly into a large Indian village, where the people looked clean, and wore cotton shirts and various other articles of dress. They immediately crowded around us, and we had the inexpressible delight to find one who spoke a little indifferent Spanish, but who at first confounded us by saying there were no whites in the country; but just then a well-dressed

Indian came up, and made his salutations in very well-spoken Spanish. In answer to our inquiries, he informed us that we were upon the *Rio de los Americanos,* (the river of the Americans,) and that it joined the Sacramento River about ten miles below. Never did a name sound more sweetly! We felt ourselves among our countrymen; for the name of *American,* in these distant parts is applied to the citizens of the United States. To our eager inquiries he answered, 'I am a *vaquero* (cow-herd) in the service of Captain Sutter, and the people of this *rancheria* work for him.' Our evident satisfaction made him communicative; and he went on to say that Captain Sutter was a very rich man, and always glad to see his country people. We asked for his house. He answered that it was just over the hill before us; and offered, if we would wait a moment, to take his horse and conduct us to it. We readily accepted his civil offer. In a short distance we came in sight of the fort; and, passing on the way the house of a settler on the opposite side, (a Mr. Sinclair,) we forded the river; and in a few miles were met a short distance from the fort by Captain Sutter himself. He gave us a most frank and cordial reception—conducted us immediately to his residence—and under his hospitable roof we had a night of rest, enjoyment, and refreshment, which none but ourselves could appreciate. But the party left in the mountains with Mr. Fitzpatrick were to be attended to; and the next morning, supplied with fresh horses and provisions, I hurried off to meet them. On the second day we met, a few miles be-

low the forks of the Rio de los Americanos; and a more forlorn and pitiable sight than they presented cannot well be imagined. They were all on foot—each man, weak and emaciated—leading a horse or mule as weak and emaciated as themselves. They had experienced great difficulty in descending the mountains, made slippery by rains and melting snows, and many horses fell over precipices, and were killed; and with some were lost the *packs* they carried. Among these, was a mule with the plants which we had collected since leaving Fort Hall, along a line of 2,000 miles travel. Out of sixty-seven horses and mules with which we commenced crossing the Sierra, only thirty-three reached the valley of the Sacramento, and they only in a condition to be led along. Mr. Fitzpatrick and his party, travelling more slowly, had been able to make some little exertion at hunting, and had killed a few deer. The scanty supply was a great relief to them; for several had been made sick by the strange and unwholesome food which the preservation of life compelled them to use. We stopped and encamped as soon as we met; and a repast of good beef, excellent bread, and delicious salmon, which I had brought along, were their first relief from the sufferings of the Sierra, and their first introduction to the luxuries of the Sacramento. It required all our philosophy and forbearance to prevent *plenty* from becoming as hurtful to us now as *scarcity* had been before."

After resting a few days, and completing preparations for the homeward journey, the party started on the 22d of March. The next day Derosier, who

had returned in safety from the search for Mr. Preuss, and whom Fremont ever regarded as among his best men, wandered away from the camp. It was probably owing to a return of the mental derangement which the sufferings of the recent journey had brought on. All attempts to find him were fruitless, and he was never heard of more, until after the lapse of about two years, he found his way into St. Louis.

Before touching upon the events of the homeward journey, which will be briefly done, we may pause for a moment, and reflect upon the extraordinary expedition from the Dalles to the junction of the Americanos and the Sacramento, of which the disappearance of Derosier may be considered the final incident.

When the season of the year at which it started from the Columbia, and the entirely unknown and forbidding character of the region it penetrated, are fully considered, it must be allowed to be one of the boldest adventures ever undertaken. It was the first exploration of a vast region, of strange features, and occupied by savage tribes and families that no traveller had ever described or seen, covering eleven degrees of latitude and ten of longitude, between 4,000 and 5,000 feet above the level of the sea, and shut in between lofty ranges crowned with perpetual snow, the Rocky Mountains in the east and the Sierra Nevada on the west. Throughout this great basin, the streams flow not into rivers seeking distant seas, but into numerous and many of them wide lakes, having no apparent connection with

the oceans of the globe, deeply impregnated in some instances, with saline and mineral ingredients, in some, turbid and thick with vegetable matter, but often clear, pure, refreshing, translucent to great depths, bordered by beaches of the finest sand, and stocked with delicious fish. The shores are surrounded by picturesque, bold, and magnificent scenery.

Of this very remarkable tract, constituting the central plate or basin of the continent, Fremont was the first explorer, and the heroism, resolution, and unconquerable perseverance of his brave party, is one of the most interesting chapters in that series of achievements which has secured and subdued this continent to our form of civilization, and will bring it all, at last, under our flag.

The expedition pursued its course southerly along the western base of the Sierra Nevada, crossing the heads of the streams that flow through California to the Bay of San Francisco. On the 13th of April it entered a pass, a little above the thirty-fifth parallel of latitude, and crossed the summit the next day.

"As we reached the summit of this beautiful pass, and obtained a view into the eastern country, we saw at once that here was the place to take leave of all such pleasant scenes as those around us. The distant mountains were now bald rocks again; and below, the land had any color but green. Taking into consideration the nature of the Sierra Nevada, we found this pass an excellent one for horses; and with a little labor, or perhaps with a more perfect examination of the localities, it might be made sufficiently practicable for wagons.

"We here left the waters of the Bay of San Francisco, and, though forced upon them contrary to my intentions, I cannot regret the necessity which occasioned the deviation. It made me well acquainted with the great range of the Sierra Nevada of the Alta California, and showed that this broad and elevated snowy ridge was a continuation of the Cascade Range, of Oregon, between which and the ocean there is still another and a lower range, parallel to the former and to the coast, and which may be called the Coast Range. It also made me well acquainted with the basin of the San Francisco Bay, and with the two pretty rivers and their valleys, (the Sacramento and San Joaquin,) which are tributary to that bay; and cleared up some points in geography on which error had long prevailed. It had been constantly represented, as I have already stated, that the Bay of San Francisco opened far into the interior, by some river coming down from the base of the Rocky Mountains, and upon which supposed stream the name of Rio Buenaventura had been bestowed. Our observations of the Sierra Nevada, in the long distance from the head of the Sacramento to the head of the San Joaquin, and of the valley below it, which collects all the waters of the San Francisco Bay, show that this neither is nor can be the case. No river from the interior does or can cross the Sierra Nevada—itself more lofty than the Rocky Mountains; and as to the Buenaventura, the mouth of which, seen on the coast, gave the idea and the name of the reputed great river, it is, in fact, a small stream of no consequence, not only below the Sierra

Nevada, but actually below the Coast Range, taking its rise within half a degree of the ocean, running parallel to it for about two degrees, and then falling into the Pacific near Monterey. There is no opening from the Bay of San Francisco into the interior of the continent. The two rivers which flow into it are comparatively short, and not perpendicular to the coast, but lateral to it, and having their heads towards Oregon and Southern California. They open lines of communication north and south, and not eastwardly; and thus this want of interior communication from the San Francisco Bay, now fully ascertained, gives great additional value to the Columbia, which stands alone as the only great river on the Pacific slope of our continent which leads from the ocean to the Rocky Mountains, and opens a line of communication from the sea to the valley of the Mississippi.

"Our cavalcade made a strange and grotesque appearance, and it was impossible to avoid reflecting upon our position and composition in this remote solitude. Within two degrees of the Pacific Ocean, already far south of the latitude of Monterey, and still forced on south by a desert on one hand, and a mountain range on the other, guided by a civilized Indian, attended by two wild ones from the Sierra, a Chinook from the Columbia, and our own mixture of American, French, German, all armed, four or five languages heard at once, above a hundred horses and mules, half wild, American, Spanish, and Indian dresses and equipments intermingled,—such was our composition. Our march was a sort of procession

—scouts ahead and on the flanks, a front and rear division, the pack animals, baggage, and horned cattle in the centre, and the whole stretching a quarter of a mile along our dreary path.

"April 25. In the afternoon, we were surprised by the sudden appearance in the camp of two Mexicans—a man and a boy. The name of the man was Andreas Fuentes, and that of the boy (a handsome lad eleven years old) Pablo Hernandez. They belonged to a party consisting of six persons, the remaining four being the wife of Fuentes, the father and mother of Pablo, and Santiago Giacome, a resident of New Mexico. With a cavalcade of about thirty horses, they had come out from Puebla de los Angeles, near the coast, under the guidance of Giacome, in advance of the great caravan, in order to travel more at leisure and obtain better grass. Having advanced as far into the desert as was considered consistent with their safety, they halted at the Archilette, one of the customary camping grounds, about eighty miles from our encampment, where there is a spring of good water, with sufficient grass, and concluded to await there the arrival of the great caravan. Several Indians were soon discovered lurking about the camp, who, in a day or two after, came in, and, after behaving in a very friendly manner, took their leave, without awakening any suspicions. Their deportment begat a security which proved fatal. In a few days afterwards, suddenly a party of about one hundred Indians appeared in sight, advancing towards the camp. It was too late, or they seemed not to have presence

of mind to take proper measures of safety, and the Indians charged down into their camp, shouting as they advanced, and discharging flights of arrows. Pablo and Fuentes were on horse-guard at the time, and mounted, according to the custom of the country. One of the principal objects of the Indians was to get possession of the horses, and part of them immediately surrounded the band; but, in obedience to the shouts of Giacome, Fuentes drove the animals over and through the assailants, in spite of their arrows; and, abandoning the rest to their fate, carried them off at speed across the plain. Knowing that they would be pursued by the Indians, without making any halt except to shift their saddles to other horses, they drove them on for about sixty miles, and this morning left them at a watering-place on the trail called Agua de Tomaso. Without giving themselves any time for rest, they hurried on, hoping to meet the Spanish caravan, when they discovered my camp. I received them kindly, taking them into my own mess, and promised them such aid as circumstances might put it in my power to give."

Fuentes was filled with the deepest anxiety about the fate of his wife, and Pablo about that of his father and mother. There was every reason, indeed, to fear the worst. The sensibilities of Fremont's noble-hearted men were highly excited by the expressions of their grief, and Carson and Godey volunteered to accompany Fuentes in pursuit of the Indians, hoping to deliver the captives, if alive, or avenge them, if dead. Fuentes returned the same night, his horse having given out, but Carson and Godey kept on.

"In the afternoon of the next day, a war-whoop was heard, such as Indians make when returning from a victorious enterprise; and soon Carson and Godey appeared, driving before them a band of horses, recognized by Fuentes to be part of those they had lost. Two bloody scalps, dangling from the end of Godey's gun, announced that they had overtaken the Indians, as well as the horses. They informed us, that after Fuentes left them, from the failure of his horse, they continued the pursuit alone, and towards nightfall entered the mountains, into which the trail led. After sunset the moon gave light, and they followed the trail by moonshine until late in the night, when it entered a narrow defile, and was difficult to follow. Afraid of losing it in the darkness of the defile, they tied up their horses, struck no fire, and lay down to sleep in silence and in darkness. Here they lay from midnight till morning. At daylight they resumed the pursuit, and about sunrise discovered the horses; and, immediately dismounting and tying up their own, they crept cautiously to a rising ground which intervened, from the crest of which they perceived the encampment of four lodges close by. They proceeded quietly, and had got with thirty or forty yards of their object, when a movement among the horses discovered them to the Indians; giving the war shout, they instantly charged into the camp, regardless of the number which the *four* lodges would imply. The Indians received them with a flight of arrows shot from their long bows, one of which passed through Godey's shirt collar, barely missing the neck; our

men fired their rifles upon a steady aim, and rushed in. Two Indians were stretched on the ground, fatally pierced with bullets; the rest fled, except a lad that was captured. The scalps of the fallen were instantly stripped off; but in the process, one of them, who had a ball through his body, sprung to his feet, the blood streaming from his skinned head, and uttering a hideous howl. An old squaw, possibly his mother, stopped and looked back from the mountain side she was climbing, threatening and lamenting. The frightful spectacle appalled the stout hearts of our men; but they did what humanity required, and quickly terminated the agonies of the gory savage. They were now masters of the camp, which was a pretty little recess in the mountain, with a fine spring, and apparently safe from all invasion. Great preparations had been made to feast a large party, for it was a very proper place for a rendezvous, and for the celebration of such orgies as robbers of the desert would delight in. Several of the best horses had been killed, skinned, and cut up; for the Indians living in mountains, and only coming into the plains to rob and murder, make no other use of horses than to eat them. Large earthen vessels were on the fire, boiling and stewing the horse-beef; and several baskets, containing fifty or sixty pairs of moccasins, indicated the presence, or expectation, of a considerable party. They released the boy, who had given strong evidence of the stoicism, or something else, of the savage character, in commencing his breakfast upon a horse's head as soon as he found he was not to be killed, but only tied as

a prisoner. Their object accomplished, our men gathered up all the surviving horses, fifteen in number, returned upon their trail, and rejoined us at our camp in the afternoon of the same day. They had rode about one hundred miles in the pursuit and return, and all in thirty hours. The time, place, object, and numbers considered, this expedition of Carson and Godey may be considered among the boldest and most disinterested which the annals of western adventure, so full of daring deeds, can present. Two men, in a savage desert, pursue day and night an unknown body of Indians into the defiles of an unknown mountain—attack them on sight, without counting numbers—and defeat them in an instant,—and for what? To punish the robbers of the desert, and to avenge the wrongs of Mexicans whom they did not know. I repeat: it was Carson and Godey who did this—the former an American, born in Kentucky; the latter a Frenchman by descent, born in St. Louis; and both trained to western enterprise from early life."

The foregoing passage presents a horrid spectacle of the barbarities incident to a wilderness life. The mind shudders at the details of the bloody conflict; but it was not long before ample and fearful evidence appeared that the sudden and awful retribution inflicted upon the savages by the intrepid Carson and his well-matched associate, was fully merited.

"April 29. To-day we had to reach the Archilette, distant seven miles, where the Mexican party had been attacked; and, leaving our encamp-

ment early, we traversed a part of the desert, the most sterile and repulsive that we had yet seen. Its prominent features were dark *sierras,* naked and dry; on the plains a few straggling shrubs—among them, cactus of several varieties. Fuentes pointed out one called by the Spaniards *bisnada,* which has a juicy pulp, slightly acid, and is eaten by the traveller to allay thirst. Our course was generally north; and, after crossing an intervening ridge, we descended into a sandy plain, or basin, in the middle of which was the grassy spot, with its springs and willow bushes, which constitutes a camping-place in the desert, and is called the Archilette. The dead silence of the place was ominous; and, galloping rapidly up, we found only the corpses of the two men; every thing else was gone. They were naked, mutilated, and pierced with arrows. Hernandez had evidently fought, and with desperation. He lay in advance of the willow, half-faced tent, which sheltered his family, as if he had come out to meet danger, and to repulse it from that asylum. One of his hands, and both his legs, had been cut off. Giacome, who was a large and strong-looking man, was lying in one of the willow shelters, pierced with arrows. Of the women no trace could be found, and it was evident they had been carried off captive. A little lap-dog, which had belonged to Pablo's mother, remained with the dead bodies, and was frantic with joy at seeing Pablo; he, poor child, was frantic with grief; and filled the air with lamentations for his father and mother. *Mi padre.—mi madre!*—was his incessant cry. When we beheld

this pitiable sight, and pictured to ourselves the fate of the two women, carried off by savages so brutal and so loathsome, all compunction for the scalped-alive Indian ceased; and we rejoiced that Carson and Godey had been able to give so useful a lesson to these American Arabs, who lie in wait to murder and plunder the innocent traveller.

"We were all too much affected by the sad feelings which the place inspired, to remain an unnecessary moment. The night we were obliged to pass there. Early in the morning we left it, having first written a brief account of what had happened, and put it in the cleft of a pole planted at the spring, that the approaching caravan might learn the fate of their friends. In commemoration of the event, we called the place *Agua de Hernandez*—Hernandez's spring."

It was afterwards ascertained that the wife of Fuentes, and mother of Pablo, were both murdered at a short distance beyond, and probably a few hours after their capture, under circumstances of the most incredible and brutal cruelty, and after fiendlike outrages and tortures.

The circumstances just related prove that Kit Carson is worthy of the renown he enjoys in the estimation of the backwoodsmen of America, as the hero of the prairies and the mountains. His name is so intimately identified with that of Fremont, that these pages owe a special tribute to his manly and noble virtues. They first met accidentally on a steamboat above St. Louis, as Fremont was starting on his first expedition—neither had ever heard of

the other. But Carson's character, although then unknown in the settlements, had long before become an object of pride and admiration to every brave heart among the trappers and hunters of America.

Christopher Carson was born in Kentucky about the year 1811, his father having been one of the early settlers of that State, and noted in his day as a hunter and Indian fighter. Within a year or two after the birth of Kit, the family moved to the then frontiers of Missouri. At the age of fifteen Kit joined a trading party to Santa Fé. From that point he went into the lower Mexican provinces, following various adventures; among others he was employed for some time as a teamster, in connection with the copper mines of Chihuahua. At seventeen years of age he commenced life as a trapper, in the region of the Rio Colorado of California. After many perils he returned to Taos, in New Mexico, and joined a trapping party to the head waters of the Arkansas, and spent about eight years in that occupation, principally among the mountains where the Missouri and Columbia rivers take their rise. The business of trapping was then in its more flourishing state, and formed a class of men of marked and striking traits. Nature in her original aspects, and in all her wildness and grandeur, was their home. Savages, fierce, brave, and stealthy, met them at every point—and privation, danger, and suffering were an ordinary experience. This mode of life, in its perfect freedom and manly excitements and achievements, was favorable in many respects to the development of noble energies and sentiments.

Carson soon became preëminent in these characteristics, and was famous as a successful trapper, unerring shot, and reliable guide and leader. In conflicts with hostile Indians he conducted many a daring and victorious enterprise. In one of these conflicts with the Blackfeet he received a rifle ball in his left shoulder, the only personal injury he ever met in battle.

He is a remarkably peaceable and quiet man, temperate in his habits, and stictly moral in his deportment. In a letter written from California, in 1847, introducing Carson as the bearer of despatches to the Government, Colonel Fremont says, "with me, Carson and truth mean the same thing. He is always the same—gallant and disinterested." He is kind-hearted, and averse to all quarrelsome and turbulent scenes, and has never been engaged in any mere personal broils or encounters, except on one single occasion, which he sometimes modestly describes to his friends.

On the 24th of May, the expedition, having skirted the southern rim of the great basin, reached the Utah Lake. At this point it is eminently proper to let Fremont himself review his route.

"Early the next day we came in sight of the lake; and, as we descended to the broad bottoms of the Spanish Fork, three horsemen were seen galloping towards us, who proved to be Utah Indians—scouts from a village, which was encamped near the mouth of the river. They were armed with rifles, and their horses were in good condition. We encamped near them, on the Spanish Fork, which is one of the prin-

cipal tributaries to the lake. Finding the Indians troublesome, and desirous to remain here a day, we removed the next morning further down the lake, and encamped on a fertile bottom near the foot of the same mountainous ridge which borders the Great Salt Lake, and along which we had journeyed the previous September.

"We had now accomplished an object we had in view when leaving the Dalles of the Columbia in November last; we had reached the Utah Lake; but by a route very different from what we had intended, and without sufficient time remaining to make the examinations which were desired. It is a lake of note in this country, under the dominion of the Utahs, who resort to it for fish. Its greatest breadth is about fifteen miles, stretching far to the north, narrowing as it goes, and connecting with the Great Salt Lake.

"In arriving at the Utah Lake, we had completed an immense circuit of twelve degrees diameter north and south, and ten degrees east and west; and found ourselves in May, 1844, on the same sheet of water which we had left in September, 1843. The Utah is the southern limb of the Great Salt Lake; and thus we had seen that remarkable sheet of water both at its northern and southern extremity, and were able to fix its position at these two points. The circuit which we had made, and which had cost us eight months of time, and 3,500 miles of travelling, had given us a view of Oregon and of North Carolina from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean, and of the two principal streams which form bays or har-

bors on the coast of that sea. Having completed this circuit, and being now about to turn the back upon the Pacific slope of our continent, and to recross the Rocky Mountains, it is natural to look back upon our footsteps, and take some brief view of the leading features and general structure of the country we had traversed. These are peculiar and striking, and differ essentially from the Atlantic side of our country. The mountains all are higher, more numerous, and more distinctly defined in their ranges and directions; and, what is so contrary to the natural order of such formations, one of these ranges, which is near the coast, (the Sierra Nevada and the Coast Range,) presents higher elevations and peaks than any which are to be found in the Rocky Mountains themselves. In our eight months' circuit, we were never out of sight of snow; and the Sierra Nevada, where we crossed it, was near 2,000 feet higher than the South Pass in the Rocky Mountains. In height, these mountains greatly exceed those of the Atlantic side, constantly presenting peaks which enter the region of eternal snow; and some of them volcanic, and in a frequent state of activity. They are seen at great distances and guide the traveller in his courses.

"The course and elevation of these ranges give direction to the rivers, and character to the coast. No great river does, or can, take its rise below the Cascade and Sierra Nevada Range; the distance to the sea is too short to admit of it. The rivers of the San Francisco Bay, which are the largest after the Columbia, are local to that bay, and lateral to the

coast, having their sources about on a line with the Dalles of the Columbia, and running each in the valley of its own, between the Coast Range and the Cascade and Sierra Nevada Range. The Columbia is the only river which traverses the whole breadth of the country, breaking through all the ranges, and entering the sea. Drawing its waters from a section of ten degrees of latitude in the Rocky Mountains, which are collected into one stream by three main forks, (Lewis's, Clark's, and the North Fork,) near the centre of the Oregon valley, this great river thence proceeds by a single channel to the sea, while its three forks lead each to a pass in the mountains, which opens the way into the interior of the continent. This fact in relation to the rivers of this region gives an immense value to the Columbia. Its mouth is the only inlet or outlet to and from the sea; its three forks lead to the passes in the mountains; it is, therefore, the only line of communication between the Pacific and the interior of North America; and all operations of war or commerce, of national or social intercourse, must be conducted upon it. This gives it a value beyond estimation, and would involve irreparable injury if lost. In this unity and concentration of its waters, the Pacific side of our continent differs entirely from the Atlantic side, where the waters of the Alleghany Mountains are dispersed into many rivers, having their different entrances into the sea, and opening many lines of communication with the interior.

"The Pacific coast is equally different from that of the Atlantic. The coast of the Atlantic is low

and open, indented with numerous bays, sounds, and river estuaries, accessible everywhere, and opening by many channels into the heart of the country. The Pacific coast, on the contrary, is high and compact, with few bays, and but one that opens into the heart of the country. The immediate coast is what the seamen call *iron bound*. A little within, it is skirted by two successive ranges of mountains, standing as ramparts between the sea and the interior country; and to get through which, there is but one gate, and that narrow and easily defended. This structure of the coast, backed by these two ranges of mountains, with its concentration and unity of waters, gives to the country an immense military strength, and will probably render Oregon the most impregnable country in the world.

"Differing so much from the Atlantic side of our continent, in coast, mountains, and rivers, the Pacific side differs from it in another most rare and singular feature—that of the Great interior Basin, of which I have so often spoken, and the whole form and character of which I was so anxious to ascertain. Its existence is vouched for by such of the American traders and hunters as have some knowledge of that region; the structure of the Sierra Nevada range of mountains requires it to be there; and my own observations confirm it. Mr. Joseph Walker, who is so well acquainted in those parts, informed me that, from the Great Salt Lake west, there was a succession of lakes and rivers which have no outlet to the sea, nor any connection with the Columbia, or with the Colorado of the Gulf of California. He

describes some of these lakes as being large, with numerous streams, and even considerable rivers, falling into them. In fact, all concur in the general report of these interior rivers and lakes; and, for want of understanding the force and power of evaporation, which so soon establishes an equilibrium between the loss and supply of waters, the fable of whirlpools and subterraneous outlets has gained belief as the only imaginable way of carrying off the waters which have no visible discharge. The structure of the country would require this formation of interior lakes; for the waters which would collect between the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Nevada, not being able to cross this formidable barrier, nor to get to the Columbia or the Colorado, must naturally collect into reservoirs, each of which would have its little system of streams and rivers to supply it. This would be the natural effect; and what I saw went to confirm it. The Great Salt Lake is a formation of this kind, and quite a large one; and having many streams, and one considerable river, four or five hundred miles long, falling into it. This lake and river I saw and examined myself; and also saw the Wahsatch and Bear River Mountains which enclose the waters of the lake on the east, and constitute, in that quarter, the rim of the Great Basin. Afterwards, along the eastern base of the Sierra Nevada, where we travelled for forty-two days, I saw the line of lakes and rivers which lie at the foot of that Sierra; and which Sierra is the western rim of the Basin. In going down Lewis's Fork and the main Columbia, I crossed only

inferior streams coming in from the left, such as could draw their water from a short distance only; and I often saw the mountains at their heads, white with snow; which, all accounts said, divided the waters of the *desert* from those of the Columbia, and which could be no other than the range of mountains which form the rim of the Basin on its northern side. And in returning from California along the Spanish trail, as far as the head of the Santa Clara Fork of the Rio Virgen, I crossed only small streams making their way south to the Colorado, or lost in sand—as the Mo-hah-ve; while to the left, lofty mountains, their summits white with snow, were often visible, and which must have turned water to the north as well as to the south, and thus constituted, on this part, the southern rim of the Basin. At the head of the Santa Clara Fork, and in the Vegas de Santa Clara, we crossed the ridge which parted the two systems of waters. We entered the Basin at that point, and have travelled in it ever since, having its southeastern rim (the Wahsatch Mountain) on the right, and crossing the streams which flow down into it. The existence of the Basin is, therefore, an established fact in my mind; its extent and contents are yet to be better ascertained. It cannot be less than four or five hundred miles each way, and must lie principally in the Alta California; the demarcation latitude of 42° probably cutting a segment from the north part of the rim. Of its interior, but little is known. It is called a *desert,* and, from what I saw of it, sterility may be its prominent characteristic; but where there

is so much water, there must be some *oasis*. The great river and the great lake reported may not be equal to the report; but where there is so much snow, there must be streams; and where there is no outlet, there must be lakes to hold the accumulated waters, or sands to swallow them up. In this eastern part of the basin, containing Sevier, Utah, and the Great Salt lakes, and the rivers and creeks falling into them, we know there is good soil and good grass, adapted to civilized settlements. In the western part, on Salmon-trout River, and some other streams, the same remark may be made.

Having examined the Three Parks, or coves in the mountains, where the great rivers, the Platte, the Arkansas, and the Colorado severally take their rise, Mr. Fremont continued his route homeward with no further noticeable occurrence, except an occasional encounter with armed bands of Indians, who, always finding him ready to fight, limited their demonstrations to mere preliminary bravadoes. When within a fortnight of the end of the journey, the river suddenly overflowed its banks one night, and nearly all the perishable collections that the hard labor of many months had accumulated, were destroyed in a moment.

The Report of Lieutenant Fremont's Second Expedition concludes as follows:—

"Here ended our land journey; and the day following our arrival, we found ourselves on board a steamboat, rapidly gliding down the broad Missouri. Our travel-worn animals had not been sold and dispersed over the country to renewed labor, but were

placed at good pasturage on the frontier, and are now ready to do their part in the coming expedition.

"On the 6th of August we arrived at St. Louis, where the party was finally disbanded, a greater number of the men having their homes in the neighborhood.

"Andreas Fuentes also remained here, having readily found employment for the winter, and is one of the men engaged to accompany me the present year.

"Pablo Hernandez remains in the family of Senator Benton, where he is well taken care of, and conciliates good-will by his docility, intelligence, and amiability. General Almonte, the Mexican Minister at Washington, to whom he was of course made known, kindly offered to take charge of him, and to carry him back to Mexico; but the boy preferred to remain where he was until he got an education, for which he shows equal ardor and aptitude.

"Our Chinook Indian had his wish to see the whites fully gratified. He accompanied me to Washington, and, after remaining several months at the Columbia College, was sent by the Indian Department to Philadelphia, where, among other things, he learned to read and write well, and speak the English language with some fluency.

"He will accompany me in a few days to the frontier of Missouri, whence he will be sent with some one of the emigrant companies to the village at the Dalles of the Columbia."

Appended to the Reports of the First and Second Expeditions, as published together, in 1845, by order

of Congress, besides the usual scientific tables, records, specimens, and calculations, there is a map, of which the author gives the following account, in the preface:—

"This map may have a meagre and skeleton appearance to the general eye, but it is expected to be more valuable to science on that account, being wholly founded upon positive data and actual operations in the field. About ten thousand miles of actual travelling and traversing in the wilderness which lies between the frontiers of Missouri and the shores of the Pacific, almost every camping station being the scene of astronomical or barometrical observations, furnish the materials out of which this map has been constructed. Nothing supposititious has been admitted upon it; so that, connecting with Captain Wilkes's survey of the mouth of the Columbia, and with the authentic surveys of the State of Missouri, it fills up the vast geographical chasm between these two remote points, and presents a connected and accurate view of our continent from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean.

"To this geographical map, delineating the face of the country over which we travelled, there is added another in profile, showing the elevations, or the rise and fall of the country from the Mississippi to the Pacific. East of the Rocky Mountains, two of these profile views are given,—one from St. Louis to the South Pass, the other from the mouth of the Great Platte to the same point. The latter is the shortest; and following, as it does, the regular descent of the river, and being seven hundred miles

west of the Mississippi, it may be that the eastern *terminus* of this line may furnish the point at which the steamboat and the steam-car may hereafter meet and exchange cargoes in their magic flight across this continent. These profile views, following the travelling routes, of course follow the lowest and levellest lines, and pass the mountain at the point of its greatest depression; but to complete the view, and to show the highest points as well as the lowest levels, many lofty peaks are sketched at their proper elevations, towering many thousands of feet above the travelling line.. It may here be excusable to suggest that these profile maps here exhibited are, perhaps, the most extended work of the kind ever constructed, being from St. Louis (according to the route we travelled) near sixteen hundred miles to the South Pass; from the mouth of the Great Platte to the same Pass, about one thousand more and then another sixteen hundred from that Pass to the tide-water of the Oregon; in all, about four thousand miles of profile mapping, founded upon nearly four hundred barometrical positions, with views sketched and facts noted in the field as we went."

CHAPTER IV

Third Expedition.—Arkansas.—Great Basin.—Hawks Peak on the Sierra.—Tlamath Lake.

On the 29th of January, 1845, President Tyler, with the advice and consent of the Senate of the United States, conferred upon Lieutenant Fremont a Brevet commission of Captain in the corps of Topographical Engineers. He was brevetted to a First Lieutenancy and a Captaincy, at the same time. For this distinguished compliment he was indebted, in part, to the instrumentality of the commanding General of the Army.

In the fall of that year he started on his Third Expedition. This was his last under the authority of the Government. It terminated in operations and results so remote from its design, as a mere exploration, and led to such extraordinary, engrossing, and complicated engagements, that the publication of a full report was for the time postponed. The two next expeditions were at his own cost, and unconnected altogether with the Government.

He went out, on the third expedition, by the northern head-waters of the Arkansas, then the boundary line of the country, to the south side of the Great Salt Lake, thence directly across the central basin, towards California, in a route of which

he was the first explorer. Upon reaching the neighborhood of the Sierra Nevada, he concluded that, in the worn and weakened condition of his men and animals, they would not be able to surmount the barrier at that point; and being short of provisions, it was necessary to get as speedily as possible into the country beyond, where supplies could be obtained. He therefore divided his party. Leaving all the provisions with the main body of it, he directed them to follow along the eastern border of the Sierra, towards the South, to a certain pass, which he named; while, with a selected company of fifteen men, entirely unencumbered, he would attempt to scale the mountains, get provisions on the other side at Sutter's, and go to their relief on the appointed route. The plan, so far as his part was concerned, entirely succeeded. He got across the mountains, with his light party, in six hours, proceeded to Sutter's, purchased fifty cattle, and drove them down the western side of the Sierra to meet the main body of his people. Unfortunately they mistook the pass, misled by a similarity of name; wandered far on to a distant pass, towards the south, and at last found their way through. Fremont remained waiting and roaming for them, in the wild and mountainous country along the western slope of the Sierra, having frequent hard fights with the savage tribes that infested them, until his cattle were wasted by exhaustion, and destroyed by injuries among the sharp rocks. Finally, he abandoned the search, and going down to the California settlements, learned that his company, after many sufferings, had come into the

country by a different route from that directed by him, quite remote from the point where he had expected to meet them. They had been placed under the command of Joseph Walker, an experienced mountaineer and excellent traveller, whose name is given to one of the principal passes through the mountain ranges. The mistake of the route was no fault of his. It seems that there are two rivers of the same name. Fremont knew of one, Walker of the other; and neither knew that there was more than one. Orders were sent to Walker to go, with his party, to San José, and there remain until Fremont should join them. Wishing to avoid all occasion of ill-will, or suspicion, on the part of the Mexican authorities in California, he went alone to Monterey, and made himself known to Mr. Larkin, the consul of the United States in that city, and, accompanied by him, waited upon Alvarado, the Alcalde, Manuel Castro, the Prefecto, and Carlos Castro, the commanding general, who constituted the leading authorities of the country. He communicated his object in coming into California, stating that he had not a single soldier of the United States army in his party, and that his sole purpose was a scientific exploration of the Continent, with a view of ascertaining the best mode of establishing a commercial intercourse between the Atlantic and Pacific regions. He requested permission to winter in the country, recruit his company, and continue his explorations. His request was granted. He then repaired to his party at San José, where they remained several weeks.

Shortly after this interview with General Castro, orders were received by that officer to drive Captain Fremont out of the country, or send him prisoner to the City of Mexico. Of these orders Fremont had no knowledge until a long time afterwards. The first intimation he had of any unfriendly feeling towards him, was in certain movements, at various points, which seemed to have a threatening aspect, as if aimed at him. But the interview with Castro, and the other high officers at headquarters, was so recent, and had been so friendly and cordial, that he could hardly believe that the appearances that had attracted his attention were meant against him. At length, however, on the 3d of March, when within about twenty-five miles of Monterey, he was met by an officer, who had a detachment of eighty dragoons in his rear to enforce his message, with a letter from Castro, ordering him, without any explanation, peremptorily, out of the country. The communication was in such a tone, so entirely in violation of the arrangement made at Monterey, on his visit to the authorities of the country, in that place; and the demonstrations were, all around, of such a belligerent look and character, that Captain Fremont felt no disposition to pay a hurried obedience to the order. He marched, with his party, directly to a lofty hill, called Hawks Peak. It commanded a view, to a great extent, all around the country. In that pure atmosphere, distant objects were clearly seen, and brought minutely to view by the aid of spy-glasses. It was evident that preparations were actively going on to attack him. The enemy was seen scaling his

guns, and gathering Californians and Indians into his ranks. Captain Fremont at once proceeded to fortify his position, and erected a staff on its highest point, forty feet in length, and unfurled from it the flag of his country. His own spirit pervaded his whole party. Although few in number, and far away from aid, in the heart of a foreign country, thus suddenly assuming a hostile attitude towards them, they were determined to defend themselves against any assault, by however great a force it might be made, and were thoroughly prepared to meet the last extremity.

On the 9th, Consul Larkin succeeded in effecting a communication with Fremont, informing him of the preparations going on to attack him. The following note, in pencil, was sent in reply:

"My Dear Sir: I this moment received your letters, and, without waiting to read them, acknowledge the receipt, which the courier requires immediately. I am making myself as strong as possible, in the intention that if we are unjustly attacked, we will fight to extremity and refuse quarter, trusting to our country to avenge our death. No one has reached our camp, and, from the heights, we are able to see troops (with the glass) mustering at St. John's, and preparing cannon. I thank you for your kindness and good wishes, and would write more at length as to my intentions did I not fear that my letter would be intercepted. We have, in nowise, done wrong to the people or the authorities of the country; and, if we are hemmed in and assaulted

here, we will die, every man of us, under the flag of our country.

Very truly yours,
J. C. FREMONT.

P. S. I am encamped on the top of the Sierra, at the headwaters of a stream which strikes the road to Monterey at the house of Don Joaquin Gomes.

Thomas O. Larkin, Esq., Consul for the United States at Monterey."

The Delawares kept an unfailing watch from every peak, or lofty crag; and with the instinctive and long-practiced vigilance, clear sightedness, and quick discernment of their race, gave notice of every movement in all directions. One morning at sunrise everything indicated a near impending assault, by overwhelming numbers. Fremont addressed his people, who assured him with one voice that they were ready to meet death with him on the spot rather than surrender. The Delawares prepared themselves at once for their last battle. They arrayed themselves in their full finery, put their red war paint on themselves and on their horses, and with all their weapons in order, made the circuit of the camp singing their war and death songs, their chargers prancing, in apparent sympathy with their riders in the solemn but exultant enthusiasm of the occasion. But the enemy shrunk from the crisis. On another occasion, they were discovered approaching by moonlight. Fremont selected twenty-five of his men, and went out to meet them. They fled in surprise as he dashed down upon them. At another

time, he went out during the day with a select band to reconnoitre, and ascertain more particularly the intentions of the enemy. After several days, as Castro ventured upon no attack, he concluded to move from his position at Hawks Peak. His people urged him strenuously to allow them to make a night assault upon Castro's camp, but he refused to gratify them. He was determined to originate no hostile movement, but confine himself wholly to the resistance of violence, and to such a course as would show that his only object was to have it understood that he was not to be driven out of the country by any such summary and intimidating methods as Castro had adopted. He therefore moved down into the San Joaquin Valley, and by easy and deliberate marches turned up through North California towards Oregon and the Columbia River.

Colonel Benton, in a speech in the Senate, characterized the course of Fremont, in hoisting the flag of his country at Hawks Peak, in well-deserved and well-expressed language:—

"Such was the reason for raising the flag. It was raised at the approach of danger; it was taken down when danger disappeared. It was well and nobly done, and worthy of our admiration. Sixty of our countrymen, three thousand miles from home, in sight of the Pacific Ocean, appealing to the flag of their country, unfurling it on the mountain-top, and determined to die under it, before they would submit to unjust aggression."

At the close of Fremont's second expedition, Carson, in taking leave of him, promised, in case a third

expedition were organized, to join it. In the meantime he had settled near Taos. On reaching Bent's Fort, when going out on his third expedition, Fremont sent a message reminding him of his promise, and saying that he would wait there for him. Although Carson had purchased a farm, intending thenceforth to lead a quiet life—so sacred did he regard his promise, and so strong was his affection for his old commander—he instantly sold his house and land, at a very considerable sacrifice, and joined the expedition in four days after receiving Fremont's note. He put his family under the care of Governor Bent during his absence. Their wives were sisters. When afterwards the Indians fell upon Taos, massacring, among others, Governor Bent, Mrs. Carson saved her life by flight.

Carson's services were as usual invaluable throughout the third expedition, and signal on many occasions. In withdrawing from California, Fremont had reached the northern end of the Tlamath Lake in Oregon, and was about exploring a new route into the Willhameth Valley. The Tlamath Indians are brave and warlike. They are rendered particularly formidable by their iron arrow-heads and axes, procured from the British trading forts north of the Columbia River. Their barbed arrows cannot be extracted but by cutting the flesh.

On the night of the 8th of May, a couple of horsemen, who did not have the appearance of Indians, were seen approaching in that out of the way and far-off place. They proved to be two of Fremont's companions, in his previous explorations,

sent on by that dangerous route to overtake him, with information that Mr. Gillespie, with three men, was behind, with despatches to him from the Government, that he had been a long time on the route searching for him, had endured much suffering, and encountered many perils by the way. Fremont the next morning took nine men, and making all haste to reach Gillespie, so as to protect his small party from the Indians, rode sixty miles that day, meeting him at its close. The story of that night was narrated by Carson some years afterwards.

CHAPTER V

North California.—Conquest of California.—Wah-lah-wah-lah Indians.—Insurrection.—Insurgents Surrender to Fremont. —Capitulation of Cowenga.

Mr. Gillespie delivered to Captain Fremont a brief letter of introduction from Mr. Buchanan, Secretary of State. It was not deemed safe to commit to writing the communication he had been sent to make, and for which he had sought Fremont at such hazard, and at so remote a point. It was entrusted to his memory, to be conveyed by word of mouth, and was in substance to this effect: That a rupture between the United States and Mexico being not improbable, it was the wish of the Government that Fremont should keep himself in a favorable position to watch the state of things in California, conciliate the feelings of its people, encourage a friendship with the United States, and do what he could to prevent that country falling into the hands of Great Britain. In obedience to this suggestion, he began to retrace his steps into California.

When Captain Fremont came into North California, he found the whole country in a state of great alarm. The entire population of California at that period, exclusive of Indians, was estimated at about ten thousand, one-fifth of whom were foreigners, chiefly from the United States. General Castro was

the military commander, and was actively exerting his influence to aggravate the jealousy of the native Californians towards foreign residents. He had issued a proclamation aimed at Americans particularly, and requiring them to leave the country. It became evident that measures had been for some time secretly concerting among many of the leading Spanish Californians, to transfer the country to the protection and control of Great Britain, and to drive out or exterminate all American settlers; (that is, as the word is universally understood, all settlers from the United States;) to expel them utterly, with their families; and to take possession of their lands. In order to accomplish this more effectually, the Indian tribes were made to participate in the conspiracy, and instigated to burn and destroy the crops and houses of Americans. This condition of things, of course, spread the utmost alarm among the intended victims of the plot. When Captain Fremont came down into the Sacramento Valley, men, women, and children flocked to him for protection, and appealed to him as a countryman. His means of information were very extensive and reliable. There were many American settlers, who had been several years in the country, intermarrying in some cases with California families, men of education and large property, like Dr. Marsh, and all of them more or less able to discover what was going on, not merely among the people, but in the consultations of the authorities. With them Captain Fremont kept up constant communication.

From these sources of information he obtained

intimations of a scheme, the authentic and official records of which he afterwards found in the archives of California, while occupying the government house in Los Angeles.

"During our stay in Monterey," says Lieutenant Walpole, "Captain Fremont and his party arrived. They naturally excited curiosity. Here were true trappers, the class that produced the heroes of Fenimore Cooper's best works. These men had passed years in the wilds, living upon their own resources; they were a curious set. A vast cloud of dust appeared first, and thence in long file emerged this wildest wild party. Fremont rode ahead, a spare, active-looking man, with such an eye! He was dressed in a blouse and leggings, and wore a felt hat. After him came five Delaware Indians, who were his body-guard, and have been with him through all his wanderings; they had charge of two baggage horses. The rest, many of them blacker than the Indians, rode two and two, the rifle held by one hand across the pommel of the saddle. Thirty-nine of them are his regular men, the rest are loafers picked up lately; his original men are principally backwoodsmen, from the State of Tennessee and the banks of the upper waters of the Missouri. He has one or two with him who enjoy a high reputation in the prairies. Kit Carson is as well known there as the duke is in Europe. The dress of these men was principally a long loose coat of deer skin, tied with thongs in front; trowsers of the same, of their own manufacture, which, when wet through, they take off, scrape well inside with a knife, and put on as soon as dry;

the saddles were of various fashions, though these and a large drove of horses, and a brass field-gun, were things they had picked up about California. They are allowed no liquor, tea and sugar only; this, no doubt, has much to do with their good conduct; and the discipline, too, is very strict. They were marched up to an open space on the hills near the town, under some large firs, and there took up their quarters, in messes of six or seven, in the open air. The Indians lay beside their leader. One man, a doctor, six feet six high, was an odd-looking fellow. May I never come under his hands!

"In justice to the Americans I must say, they seemed to treat the natives well, and their authority extended every protection to them."

A lieutenant in the American Navy, (now a commander,) George Minor, under examination by the military committee of the United States Senate, described the impression made upon him, by Fremont's entrance into Monterey, in these words, taken from his deposition:—

"The undersigned was on duty on shore when Captain Fremont arrived with his force at Monterey, from the North. The undersigned believes that the appearance of this body of men, and the well-known character of its commander, not only made a strong impression upon the British Admiral and officers, but an equally impressive and more happy one upon those of the American Navy then in Monterey. For himself, the undersigned can say, that after he had seen Captain Fremont's command, all his doubts about the conquest of California were removed."

The hoisting of our flag at Monterey, on the 7th of July, 1846, saved California and the Pacific coast to the United States, and prevented a disastrous collision between this country and Great Britain. That flag was hoisted in consequence of Fremont's gallant achievements in North California. He is therefore entitled to the glory of having saved California from falling into the hands of a foreign power, and secured the extension of our Union over the whole breadth of the continent, from shore to shore.

Immediately after the events just related, Commodore Sloat sailed for the United States, leaving Commodore Stockton, who had arrived a few days before, in command. Fremont, with his volunteers, embarked on board the sloop-of-war *Cyane* for San Diego. Landing there, he marched to Los Angeles, the then capital of California. Commodore Stockton, having landed his force at San Pedro, reached Los Angeles first, and, on the 17th of August, completed and proclaimed the conquest of California. Castro fled to Sonora.

Fremont continued to act under Commodore Stockton, receiving various successive appointments from him, as major of the California battalion, afterwards military commandant of California, and finally governor and commander-in-chief in California. Early in September, Captain Fremont left Los Angeles. A few weeks afterwards, an extensive insurrection broke out in southern California. Fremont, who had returned to the Sacramento country, immediately set about raising a battalion among the settlers there to aid in its suppression.

At this time an additional panic arose from the report of an Indian invasion from the north. It was said that 1,000 Wah-lah-wah-lahs were advancing to attack Sutter's Fort. The whole country was aroused, and every element of disposable force was drawn out to meet the threatened danger. Fremont had already assembled a body of several hundred western riflemen towards the completion of his California battalion, when the news reached him. He was quite confident that the story was exaggerated; but it was necessary to restore security in the northern frontier. He took three tried men with him, and went directly to meet the Wah-lah-wah-lahs. He found them much less numerous than had been represented, but assembled in considerable force, and in a state of the greatest exasperation. He went, with his three men, directly into their midst. One of them knew him, and all gathered round him to tell their wrongs. They had been robbed, and one of their best young men killed, by the whites. He promised them redress if they would follow his advice. He told them that he was going to the south, and could not attend to them until the spring, but that he would then meet them, at a place agreed upon, and have justice done them. He advised them, in the meantime, to go off on a winter hunt, said that he would let one of his own men go with them, to hold over them the United States flag, and that whoever struck that flag struck him. They were perfectly subdued by his talk, and manner of treating them: at once gave up their plan of attacking the whites; and agreed to go off on a winter hunt. They gave him

ten of their young braves to go with him, who proved themselves among the best in his battalion. In the Spring of the year, he met them, although at a great inconvenience, and gave them of his own horses until they were satisfied. In this way he not only stopped an Indian war, and recruited his own ranks, but he taught a lesson which it would be well to have inculcated upon those who undertake to grapple with our Indian difficulties, and enforced upon the administration of that department of our government.

On the 12th of October, Fremont, with his battalion, arrived at San Francisco. He there embarked his command, in the ship *Sterling,* to go down the coast to Santa Barbara. He left his horses, intending to remount his men, in the south. Two days out, he fell in with the *Vandalia,* a merchant ship, and learned that no horses could be had below, the Californians having driven their entire stock into the interior. He immediately determined to return to Monterey and make the march over land. While in Monterey, on the 27th of October, he learned that he had been appointed a lieutenant-colonel of a rifle regiment in the army of the United States. His commission was dated May 29, and signed by President Polk.

Having despatched a courier to the Sacramento Valley, to fill up his troops and obtain additional supplies, he made all the necessary preparations for an arduous winter march. In the mean time the insurrection had assumed a formidable character. A party of four hundred American sailors and marines,

on their way from San Pedro to Los Angeles, were beaten back, with the loss of six men killed, by a strong force of Californians. Los Angeles and Santa Barbara were in their hands. Larkin, the United States consul, had been taken prisoner. Captains Burroughs and Foster and Mr. Eames, were killed in a severe skirmish while escorting a lot of horses to Fremont's camp. Captain Burroughs, on this occasion, rode Fremont's horse, Sacramento. When the captain fell, he was in front of his men. The sagacious animal seemed to comprehend fully the relations of the fight. Immediately, upon losing his rider, he dashed back to his own party, wheeled into the ranks, and was impatient to bear another hero against the foe. On this occasion, one of the Wah-lah-wah-lah Indians performed a remarkable feat of heroism. He volunteered to carry intelligence to Colonel Fremont of the attack. He was closely pursued by the enemy, one of whom, having nearly overtaken him, drove his lance at him; in trying to parry it, he received it through his hand; with the other hand he grasped his tomahawk, and in an instant clave the skull of his pursuer. Two others overtook him and shared the same fate in succession. He rode on until his horse gave out, and then reached Monterey on foot.

Colonel Fremont immediately started. His force consisted of four hundred mounted men, and three pieces of artillery under the command of Lieutenant McLane of the navy. A large drove of beef cattle followed to serve as provisions on the march. At San Juan, on the 29th of November, a party of emi-

grants, who had recently crossed the country, made a most valuable accession to his force, comprising many men of superior intelligence and standing, and contributing essentially to the energy of the expedition. One of them, Edwin Bryant, who, in 1849, published a work on California, served as a first lieutenant of one of the companies, and became alcalde of San Francisco.

After marching one hundred and fifty miles, they surprised, in a night of pitchy darkness, San Louis Obispo, the seat of a district commandant, without firing a gun, and captured Don Jesus Pico, the head of the insurrection in that quarter. Two days afterwards, December 16th, Pico was tried by a court-martial, and condemned to death, for breaking his parole. The next day, about an hour before noon, at which time the execution was to take place, a procession of females, headed by a lady of fine appearance, proceeded to the quarters of Colonel Fremont, and with all the fervor natural to a mother, wife, children, and near relatives, under such circumstances, implored for mercy, and, prostrate and in tears, begged for the life of the convict. Their supplication was granted. Pico, who had borne himself with perfect coolness and firmness at the trial, and had prepared to die with "the solemn dignity of a Spaniard," when brought in and informed of his pardon, flung himself with unrestrained emotion before Colonel Fremont, clasped his knees, swore eternal fidelity, and begged the privilege of fighting and dying for him.

His subsequent conduct proved him faithful to his

pledge. Some have blamed Colonel Fremont for his clemency on this occasion; but he knew better than they know the great and deep laws of our nature. He knew well the people of California, who were more truly subdued by that act of mercy, than by all the bloodshed of battle, and all the terrors of our power.

On the 27th of December, the battalion entered without resistance the town of Santa Barbara, where it remained recruiting until the 3d of January, 1847. On the 11th of January, while pursuing their march, they were met by two Californians, riding in great haste, bare-headed, who informed them that the American forces, under Commodore Stockton, had retaken Los Angeles, after a victorious engagement with the insurgent forces. The enemy's force was understood to be in the vicinity, and the next day two California officers came into camp to treat for peace. After full consultation, articles were agreed upon on the 13th of January, 1847. They stipulated that all Californians should deliver up their arms, return peaceably to their homes, not take up arms again during the war between the United States and Mexico, and assist and aid in keeping the country in a state of peace and tranquillity. Any Californian or citizen of Mexico, who might desire to do so, was to be permitted to leave the country, and none be required to take the oath of allegiance to the United States, until a treaty of peace should be signed and made between the United States and Mexico. The articles of capitulation were signed by officers duly commissioned for the purpose, and approved by "J.

C. Fremont, Lieutenant-Colonel U. S. Army, and Military Commandant of California, and by Andres Pico, Commandant of Squadron and Chief of the National Forces of California."

This was the "Capitulation of Cowenga." It terminated the war so far as California was concerned. No hostile arm was ever again lifted, except in the ordinary form of local Indian outbreaks, within the limits of that State, against the authority of the United States. It secured reconciliation as well as peace. It is in evidence, on the records of the government, that the final conquest of California could not have been accomplished by any forces then on the Pacific coast, without the aid of the California battalion; and that, had it not been consummated by the Treaty of Cowenga, a "bloody, vexatious, and predatory warfare" would surely have been protracted for an indefinite length of time. The whole western slope of the Sierra Nevada would have afforded safe retreats, inaccessible to naval and even regular military forces, from which ravaging parties would have rushed down upon the plains, and where insurrectionary movements would have been fomented perpetually. Fremont terrified the Californians and the Indians by the celerity and boldness of his movements, and he conquered their hearts by the good conduct of his men, and the moderation and clemency of his policy.

In a despatch from General Kearney to the War Department at Washington, dated Ciudad de los Angeles, January 14, 1847, he says:—

"This morning, Lieutenant-Colonel Fremont, of

the regiment of mounted riflemen, reached here with four hundred volunteers from the *Sacramento;* the enemy capitulated with him yesterday, near San Fernando, agreeing to lay down their arms, and we have now the prospect of having peace and quietness in this country, which I hope may not be interrupted again."

CHAPTER VI.

Fourth Expedition.—A Senator of the United States.

Colonel Fremont's Fourth Expedition (1848-49) was undertaken, mainly, at his own cost and charges. Several public-spirited and liberal individuals, belonging to St. Louis, Missouri, advanced the necessary means, and took the risk of repayment, which was duly made. Among them, Col. Robert Campbell and Thornton Grimsley are particularly to be mentioned. O. D. Filley presented outright a considerable part of the camp equipage. Doctor George Engleman, also of St. Louis, a gentleman of great personal worth and scientific attainments and zeal, devoted himself, on this as on all other occasions, to aid Colonel Fremont in his preparations.

On the 25th of June, 1849, President Taylor appointed him commissioner for running the boundary line between the United States and the Republic of Mexico. He never entered on the duties of that appointment. In the meanwhile, under the auspices, and with the encouragement of that truly patriotic and enlightened chief magistrate, the people of California took the usual steps to form a constitution. Colonel Fremont exerted his whole influence to se-

cure that portion of the continent to free labor. The great point was gained. And he was elected one of the first senators of the State of California in the congress of the United States.

The State of California was admitted into the Union on the 9th of September, 1850. The next day, her senators elect, John C. Fremont and William M. Gwin, after a last desperate effort to prevent it, were allowed to take their seats, the former being introduced to the senate by Mr. Barnwell of South Carolina. Fremont's name had been made familiar to the ears of senators, particularly at that session, by the extent to which California occupied their discussions. In reference to that country, as both conqueror and explorer, he was the authority on which they all relied. In a speech on the compromise bills, delivered in the Senate on the 25th of June, 1850, Mr. Soulé, arguing a certain point relating to California, uses these words: "This opinion is fully sustained by the highest authority which I can summon before the Senate—that of the learned, enterprising, and indefatigable officer, to whose labors the United States and the world are so much indebted." Such was then the universal estimate throughout the country of the value of the public services of Colonel Fremont.

As is the practice of the Senate, in the case of members entering the body as the first representatives of new States, Fremont and Gwin drew lots for the classes to which they were to belong. The term of one-third of the senators expires on each alternate 4th March. Colonel Fremont drew the

shortest term, expiring with the 31st congress on the 4th of March, 1851. Mr. Gwin drew the longest term, continuing to the close of the 33d congress on the 4th of March, 1855. As Fremont was unable to attend the short term of that congress, his whole senatorial service consisted of what remained of the long session, which terminated September 30th—that is, twenty-one days.

In that short time he accomplished an extraordinary amount of work. Immediately, upon taking his seat, indeed, on that very day, he submitted a resolution describing seventeen post routes, covering the whole territory of California, and gave notice of a variety of bills, which provided for the extension over that State of all the functions of the Government, in its several departments. These bills were designed to complete the organization of the whole system of society. They legalized all its interests, pursuits, privileges, and securities, and brought them within the sphere and under the protection of judicial tribunals.

Colonel Fremont confined himself, while in the Senate, mainly to the discussion of matters relating to California, and in the crowded hurry and complication of business during the last weeks of a summer session, abstained from long speeches. In only one or two instances can his remarks, as they are reported in the *Congressional Globe,* be considered as approaching that character. He was relied upon to explain and illustrate the circumstances and wants of his own State, and he was ever prompt to do it; but in all cases, in the briefest possible terms. His

style of debate was compact, clear, easy, and natural. He was thoroughly equipped with the requisite information, and presented his views sensibly and forcibly. There is a business aspect about his remarks that distinguishes him as a practical statesman. His three weeks' parliamentary service is very interesting, as an example well worthy of imitation.

The great service Colonel Fremont rendered to his constituents and the country, while in the Senate of the United States, was in securing to the miner the entire product of his labor, and preventing a tax being levied upon the precious metals. When his bill to this effect came up for discussion on the 24th of September, a strenuous effort was made to amend it by substituting a provision that all gold extracted from the mines or placers of California, should be and remain the property of the United States, and delivered over accordingly, the miner to receive it back at a certain rate, which would leave a percentage in the hands of Government. The Senate, convinced by the statements of the California Senator, rejected this amendment. As further amendments continued to be urged, which would have essentially changed the policy of his bill, Colonel Fremont at last felt constrained, on the 25th of September, to enter, at greater length than was his custom, upon the defence of his views. He introduced his remarks as follows:—

"The very advanced period of the session when we obtained our seats, and were able to bring forward the California business, induced me to take a course in relation to our bills which I thought most

agreeable to the Senate and best suited to secure for them a favorable consideration. This was not to use the indulgence of the Senate for making speeches, but to confine myself to a brief exposition of the nature and principles of a bill when it should be called up, and then to answer, as well as I could, the inquiries and objections of senators either to principles or details. But I find such a course difficult on this bill, which introduces a new subject, and one which, from its novelty and importance, excites, and ought to excite, much interest, and requires close examination. The principles of this bill, as I have already stated them, are, to exclude all idea of making a national revenue out of these mines, to prevent the possibility of monopolies by moneyed capitalists, and to give to NATURAL CAPITAL, that is to say, to LABOR and INDUSTRY, a fair chance to work, and the secure enjoyment of what they find. To carry out these principles to their just results, all the details of the bill are carefully directed."

The public records show that it is mainly by the exertions of Fremont that the Senate of the United States was persuaded to avoid the policy of taxing the gold of California. It is free to all who toil for it. There is no inducement and no room left for fraud or concealment. Industry possesses and enjoys its full reward. Labor is protected from exaction, clothed with its proper dignity, and crowned with prosperity. The people feel the government only in its munificence and guardian care. Every motive that can prompt to enterprise, and every spring that can develop energy is brought to bear;

and we may repose in a just confidence that the mineral treasures of the Pacific coast will contribute, with a mighty power, to fulfil the great design of all Fremont's labors,—in transferring to channels, to be opened across our continent, the commerce of the world.

CHAPTER VII

Engages in the Cattle Business in California.—Gold Discovery.—Visit to England and France.—Imprisonment in London.—Fifth Expedition.—Pacific Railroad.—Mariposa Title Finally Confirmed by the Supreme Court of the United States.

In returning to California by the isthmus, after the close of the session of Congress, in the fall of 1850, Fremont suffered from Panama fever, which left him for a long time quite paralyzed by a neuralgic affection of the left side. He was utterly unable, from this cause, to return to Washington to serve out the residue of his term. He was a candidate for reëlection to the United States Senate, and was supported by the Free State party. Governor Charles Robinson was a member of the California legislature, at the time, and their joint struggles to save that State from slavery were, as they both have declared, the foundation of the friendship that exists between them, and have given additional force to the ardent sympathy which Colonel Fremont has expressed, from the first, in such decisive language and on all occasions, in the devotion of Robinson, and his heroic fellow-sufferers, to the same sacred cause in Kansas. There were more than 140 ballots. Every native Californian voted for him from the beginning

to the end. There was no election; and the whole subject was postponed to the next legislature.

When his health was sufficiently restored, he went into the cattle-raising business; after which he paid a brief visit to Europe.

In England, as afterwards on the continent, he received attentions which showed the extent to which his geographical discoveries and scientific reports had given him a European reputation. His brilliant and chivalrous proceedings in California had, no doubt, also attracted much observation. Learned and scientific societies invited him to attend their meetings. Many distinguished persons, of eminent attainments and high position, sought his acquaintance.

Not long after this, Colonel Fremont went to Paris, where he took a house, in which he continued about a year. In June, 1853, he returned to his own country.

In August, 1853, he started upon his fifth and last expedition, being determined to solve the problem of the practicability of a trans-continental communication, by common road, and by railroad. This expedition was at the joint expense of Colonel Fremont and Colonel Benton.

The particular point to which attention was to be directed, was, to ascertain the winter condition of the country, in reference to the practicability of a railroad, to determine how far snow would be an obstruction, and whether the circumstances incident to that season could be encountered and surmounted.

So great a length of time elapsed before hearing

from him, that the most serious apprehensions began to prevail; and as weeks and months wore away and no intelligence came from any quarter, a painful conviction deepened in the public mind that he had met, at last, the fate he had so often braved. It was not until the early part of April, 1854, that his safety was ascertained. Colonel Babbitt, the Secretary of Utah Territory, was on his way to Washington, with the United States mail. He had left the Great Salt Lake on the 4th of February, and was going by what is called the coast route, that is, taking passage on the Pacific side, and crossing by Panama. On the 8th of February, an Indian came to his camp and told him that, the day before, he had met a company of Americans, and "that they were hungry." That night Babbitt overtook Fremont at a small Mormon settlement. He sent a man to his camp to communicate with him, but Fremont excused himself from talking as he was too much worn out; but the next morning early, he called upon Babbitt and informed him of the route and condition of his party. Colonel Babbitt published an account of the meeting in the California papers, and they brought the first intelligence received from the expedition. About the same time the Philadelphia *Bulletin* contained an extract from a letter of Mr. S. N. Carvallo, Colonel Fremont's daguerreotypist, dated February 8, and brought in, undoubtedly, by Colonel Babbitt, in which he says that the party had "lived fifty days on horse-flesh, and for the last forty-eight hours had been without food of any kind."

The St. Louis *Democrat* of April 8, 1854, speak-

ing of this last expedition, after mentioning that it was undertaken, as well as the previous one, at his own expense, says that when he set out upon it, "his health was in a precarious condition, and he was even compelled to take with him a physician, who accompanied him to the Rocky Mountains. His private business in California called loudly for his presence there, having suffered by his absence in Europe, protracted by imprisonment for debts incurred in the conquest of California, and which was adding millions every year to the wealth of our people, whilst our government neglected and refused to pay the debt incurred by Fremont in its acquisition. It was under such difficulties and embarrassments, in the face of so much personal sacrifice and danger, that this expedition was undertaken by the heroic and intrepid adventurer."

On Colonel Fremont's return to the Atlantic States, the St. Louis *Intelligencer* welcomed him in the following language:—

"The maxim that fortune favors the brave, has been signally illustrated by the fact that the winter which Colonel Fremont chose for exploring a howling wilderness of thousands of miles, where he was cut off for weeks from the succor and sympathy of civilized man, except his own party, has been the hardest winter ever known in those regions. To carry his men safely through the fearful hardships and perils of this unexampled winter, is itself a solution of the problem which he went to determine, besides showing fortitude, mental resources, and unconquerable energy of will, which stamp the hardy

explorer as one of the great men of action who make their mark upon their country and their age. It is the fit crowning achievement of a series of adventurous explorations, not surpassed, if equalled, in respect to the qualities displayed and the magnitude of the results, by any similar career in the history of mankind. The career of Fremont has been characteristically western and American, at a time when the great work of western America is to subdue the wilderness. He is a mightier Daniel Boone, on a far more magnificent theatre, and adds to the sturdy qualities of the pioneer of civilization, those graces and attainments of science and literature, which only the highest civilization can confer."

In the *National Intelligencer,* of June 13, 1854, Colonel Fremont published a letter condensing the general results of his last exploration, which the House of Representatives ordered to be reprinted among its miscellaneous documents. When his full report is published, it will contain a rigid and thorough discussion of all the obstacles and difficulties in the way of the construction of a railroad connecting the Atlantic States, centrally, with the Pacific coast. It is well known that he is fully convinced that it can be done. When the people say that it shall be done, it will be done. The resources of this great country are adequate to the work. Its commerce, its union, and its power, require it. All that is needed is a government pledged to accomplish it, and honest, firm, and energetic enough to redeem its pledge.

CHAPTER VIII

General Remarks.

THE career of Colonel Fremont must be considered as one of the most active, and crowded with service, of any in the whole circle of biography. Considering that we live in what is called a utilitarian age, and that his line of occupation has itself been eminently practical, it is remarkable how much that is romantic and almost marvellous is spread over it. Poetry has seldom indulged in visions stranger or more exciting than has been his reality. Chivalry has seldom had finer models than his camp presented. The artist finds as many scenes of varied and most attractive interest, in the events and circumstances delineated on the foregoing pages, as in the experience of any feudal or heroic period of the world. The days of high adventure are not over; life, in our times, and in our country, opens still a field for true heroism; and, in every calling, presents emergencies that will try and display the power and glory of courage, truth, benevolence, and fidelity.

[The death of the noted American explorer occurred in New York City on July 13, 1890, in his seventy-eighth year. After his career as "Pathfinder" and early opener of the route over the

Rockies to the Pacific, Fremont took part (1846-47) in the conquest of California and in 1850-51 acted as United States senator for that State. In 1856, he was the unsuccessful Republican candidate for the United States Presidency, and during the Civil War was successively Federal commander of the Western Department and United States commander at Cross Keys. From 1878 to 1882, he was governor of Arizona.—EDITOR.]

The *Eclectic Review,* in an article on an English reprint of the Reports of his first two Expeditions across the Continent, expresses itself in the following emphatic and discriminating language:—

"The expedition required much physical strength, great courage, and no common skill in meeting the contingencies which daily arose. These were pre-ëminently possessed by Captain Fremont, in happy combination with the knowledge which enabled him to bring from the comparatively unknown region he visited, important contributions to the sciences of astronomy, geography, botany, and geology."

The opinions of the scientific men of his own country were expressed by Professor Silliman in a review of his Reports, in the *American Journal of Science and Art,* second series. Vol. III. March, 1847.

"Few travellers have encountered greater hardships, and none have exhibited more indomitable courage or untiring zeal." "Captain Fremont's journal is written in a graphic style, bearing evidence of literal accuracy in all its statements, and yet, in many parts, reading like a romance. With deep interest we follow the adventurous traveller, threading

his pathless way over lofty ridges, through dense forests, and up the icy heights." Speaking of the fact that a particular flower had been called "Fremontia," he says: "It is right that this bold explorer of the mountains should have his name inscribed among the flowers of the region, and about its loftiest heights, as well as upon the honored page of history."

Fremont has ever been engrossed with great views and projects. He has led the way, in our day, in opening to view the vast hidden regions between the great mountain ranges of the Continent. He first unfurled our flag on the summits of them both. To his boldness and prompt decision we are indebted for the integrity of our Pacific empire; and, if the great desire of his heart and object of his life is to be accomplished, we shall have a PACIFIC RAILROAD.

His letter to the *National Intelligencer* of June 13, 1854, closes with these words:—

"It seems a treason against mankind and the spirit of progress which marks the age, to refuse to put this one completing link to our national prosperity and the civilization of the world. Europe still lies between Asia and America; build this railroad, and things will have revolved about; America will lie between Asia and Europe,—the golden vein which runs through the history of the world, will follow the iron track to San Francisco, and the Asiatic trade will finally fall into its last and permanent road, when the ancient and the modern Chryse throw open their gates to the thoroughfare of the world."

No man can claim the glory of a true American

by a better title. He has made the knowledge and the development of the resources of this continent the great end of all his exertions, and has pursued it with a self-sacrificing devotion. His name is stamped with an imprint that can never be obliterated, over the whole breadth of its geography.

Exploring the North American Continent, of which he has seen more than any other man, with this object in view, he has naturally become devoted to the cause of free labor. It has always been obvious to him, as one would suppose it could not fail to be to every intelligent person, that the realization of the commercial, industrial, social, and moral greatness, of which America is capable, depends vitally and wholly upon maintaining the DIGNITY and the RIGHTS of LABOR. He contended earnestly to make California a free State, and his sympathies are with the struggles of freemen everywhere against the extension of slavery, as his letter to Governor Robinson of Kansas shows.

The example of Colonel Fremont has been delineated in his work, and is exhibited to his countrymen not for any temporary purpose, but because it ought, from its essential worth and importance, to be placed where all can contemplate it. His personal history is, in many essential particulars, especially in reference to California affairs, the history of the country. But the example is held up, mainly, on account of its moral value to the rising generations of America. The course of John Charles Fremont is a pattern, and his success an encouragement to every noble mind, which, despising sloth and ease, folly

and pleasure, aspires to an honorable usefulness to be achieved by meritorious exertions.

The self-made man, sustaining himself in the pursuit of knowledge, by incessant labors as an humble teacher of private classes—the young pioneer, penetrating interior forests, climbing snow-clad mountains, enduring every privation, and braving every danger—the patriot soldier, ever ready to die beneath the flag of his country—the humane conqueror, by clemency making his victories complete—the gallant commander, just and kind to his men—the enlightened legislator, watching over the interests and rights of LABOR and INDUSTRY—the scientific scholar, commanding the respect of the learned men of his country and the world—and the far-reaching statesman, embracing the continent in his policy, and giving his life, in an unparalleled service of toil, suffering, and peril, to open a channel through which the wealth of the other continents may flow over its surface, are all before the eyes of the YOUNG MEN OF AMERICA, in the character portrayed on these pages. May the spectacle give ardor to every manly virtue, and inspire all hearts with industry and resolution in self-improvement, with fidelity and courage in the discharge of duty, and with an exalted and comprehensive patriotism.